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AN EXPERIMENT IN TEACHING WRITING TO COLLEGE FRESHMEN (VOICE PROJECT).

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THIS EXPERIMENT WITH 100 STUDENT VOLUNTEERS WAS CONDUCTED WITHIN THE REGULAR FRESHMAN ENGLISH PROGRAM AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY BY A GROUP OF TEACHERS WHO WERE THEMSELVES WRITERS, AND BY AN EQUAL NUMBER OF GRADUATE STUDENTS. THE AIMS OF THE EXPERIMENT WERE (1) TO TEACH WRITING, NOT THROUGH RHETORICAL TECHNIQUES, BUT THROUGH HELPING THE STUDENT DISCOVER AND DEVELOP HIS OWN WRITING "VOICE" AND A PERSONAL OR IDENTIFIABLE PROSE, WHETHER THE WRITING BE CREATIVE OR EXPOSITORY, (2) TO INVOLVE IN SUCH TEACHING NOVELISTS, POETS, PLAYWRIGHTS, ESSAYISTS, AND PERSONS IN DIVERSE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES, (3) TO WORK AT VARIOUS AGE LEVELS, THROUGH INVOLVING BOTH STUDENTS AND FACULTY IN EXPERIMENTS IN ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS, (4) TO WORK WITH STUDENTS FROM VARIOUS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS, AND (5) TO INVOLVE OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH VISITS, EXCHANGES, SEMINARS, AND DEMONSTRATIONS. THE MATERIALS IN THIS REPORT DOCUMENT WHAT WENT ON IN THE CLASSROOM, HOW THE STUDENTS TAUGHT IN LOCAL SCHOOLS, HOW STUDENTS WERE ENCOURAGED TO WRITE AND REVISE THEIR WORK--ESPECIALLY THROUGH THE USE OF THE TAPE RECORDERS--AND THE KIND OF TEACHING THAT A GROUP OF STUDENTS UNDERTOOK IN A SPECIAL SUMMER PROGRAM FOR ENTERING NEGRO STUDENTS AT THE COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO. FOUR PAPERS WRITTEN AT THE TUFTS SEMINAR TO INDICATE NEW EXPERIMENTS IN UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTION (1965) ARE INCLUDED. ALSO INCLUDED ARE FOUR APPENDIXES CONTAINING LISTS OF CONSULTANTS AND VOICE PROJECT PARTICIPANTS AS WELL AS REPORTS ON THE VOICE PROJECT AT STANFORD AND IN THE LOCAL SCHOOLS. (AUTHOR/BN)

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AN EXPERIMENT IN TEACHING WRITING TO COLLEGE FRESHMEN

October 1967

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AN EXPERIMENT IN TEACHING WRITING TO COLLEGE FRESHMEN

Final Report

Project No. 6-2075
Contract No. OEC-4-6-062075-1180

AN EXPERIMENT IN TEACHING WRITING TO COLLEGE FRESHMEN

(VOICE PROJECT)

John Hawkes

Stanford University

Stanford, California

October 1967

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

SUMMARY x

THE VOICE PROJECT AT STANFORD, by John Hawkes xix

I. BACKGROUND: TUFTS SEMINAR. 1

"Report of the Working Committee on English, Literature, and Arts," by Walter J. Ong, S.J. 3

"Last Try," by Benjamin DeMott. 10

"Institutes for Literary Studies," by Albert J. Guerard 13

"The Voice Project," by John Hawkes 18

II. THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE. 23

Section 51: John Hawkes and Zeese Papanikolas.
Log by Zeese Papanikolas 24

October 3 24
In-class writing based on Katherine Anne Porter's recorded reading of the end of "The Downward Path to Wisdom."

*October 10. 28
Critical exercise matching anonymous students' taped voices with unidentified samples of their writing.

*October 19. 32
Problems of elaboration, literary metaphor, and child's voice revealed in discussion, reading aloud and extemporaneous writing -- "impression/analysis" assignment.

October 20. 34
In-class writing -- "impression/analysis" assignment.

October 24. 36
Reading and discussion of "A Taste of Honey."

---

*Asterisks mark classes we consider unconventional or for which log entries have been amplified with student work, transcribed dialogue, etc.

Page

*October 26 44
Discussion of student's monologue -- "childhood recollection" assignment. Focusing on problems of personal narrative versus fiction and of excessive detachment.

*November 7 46
Discussion of In Cold Blood, based on a selection from Capote's reading of "Children on Their Birthdays." (Transcribed dialogue included.)

*November 14 53
Student reports and discussion of In Cold Blood. In-class writing attempting to restore voice to voiceless passage. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

*November 23 56
Special reading exercise based on one line of dialogue from Faulkner's Old Man.

November 28 59
Further discussion of Old Man and Faulkner recording. In-class writing in response to student poem.

*January 9 62
Characteristics of elementary school student's voice apparent in transcript as compared with characteristics heard in his voice on tape.

*January 16 64
Further discussion of child's language and personality with consultants Walter Ong and Jerome Bruner.

*January 26 65
Students' reading and in-class writing based on George MacBeth's "A Child's Garden."

February 6 68
Taped reading and discussion of student's poem with consultants Carolyn Fitchett and John Knoepfle.

*February 8 69
Discussion of student's poem based on stories about speaker and interpretive readings by the author and other writers including John Barth.

February 20 73
Comparison of tape-recorded dialogue of school children with passage from Dylan Thomas's Under Milkwood.

*March 6 74
Discussion of one student's emerging voice in several prose passages. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

Page

*March 7 80
Class discussion of children's poems; comparison between paragraph written by child and voiceless version of it. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

March 13. 90
John Felstiner (visitor) reading aloud Old English poetry while students write down emotional reactions to his intonations and the sounds of partially familiar words.

*April 4 91
In-class writing and discussion based on taped composition of sounds. Brief discussion of tall tale model. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

April 10. 99
Discussion of TV production of The Questions. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

*April 17. 103
Readings and discussion of students' tall tales with consultant John Hersey and visitors Benson Snyder and Johnie Scott. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

*April 23. 113
Discussion of series of revisions by one student. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

May 2 120
Ballad of the Sad Cafe -- reading exercises.

May 8 - 18. 121
Student pairs working on revisions by making taped readings, "talking out" materials, and re-writing in class.

June 6. 129
Comparison of voices in three critical essays on Flannery O'Connor. Final discussion based on anonymous readings of statements intended to shock parents, teachers, or classmates.

Section 52. Jerome Charyn and Robert Weston.
Log by Robert Weston 131

*November 15 131
Consideration of "three basic voices" in student's childhood recollection.

*November 21 135
Discussion of tape recording of elementary school student based on discrepancy between taped speaking voice and transcript.

Page

*November 29 139
Continuation of work with elementary school student's tape.

Section 54: Mark Mirsky and Francelia Mason.
Log by Francelia Mason. 142

*January 12. 142
Class discussion on shouting and primitive language. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

*January 19. 146
Consideration of insults and curses, and of reading as acting. (Transcribed dialogue included.)

February 23 148
Class session on living folklore discovered, taped, edited and transcribed by students.

Section 55: Clive Miller and Charlotte Morse.
Log by Charlotte Morse 150

January 25. 150
Discussion of high school student's essay comparing two schools (Ravenswood High School, a predominantly Negro school, and Gunn High School).

January 27. 153
Dramatic reading of Cain and Abel.

February 9. 154
Class discussion of tapes made at De Anza Elementary School.

III. WORK IN THE SCHOOLS 158

Section 51 at Cubberley High School: "Teaching at Cubberley" by Zeese Papanikolas 164

Section 51 at Gunn High School: Log Excerpts by Helene Zimnicki (Stanford Freshman). 177

Section 54 at Terman Junior High School: Log Excerpts by Francelia Mason; Evaluations by Stanford Freshmen; Example of Revision . . 187

IV. SUMMER PROGRAM. 195

"The Black Voice: Teaching at the College of San Mateo," by Thomas Grissom 196

Page
V. ASSIGNMENTS AND STUDENTS' WRITING 227

Writing Assignments 228

Kathy Arbuckle 228

Helene Zimnicki. 234

Jim Kilgore. 239

Additional Selected Assignments. 245

In-Class Writing. 254

Revisions 260

APPENDICES. 272

Appendix A: "A Sketchy Report on 'The Voice Project' at Stanford," by Bernice Zelditch, Department of English, Foothill College . . 273

Appendix B: The Voice Project in the Local Schools 283

Appendix C: Consultants. 289

Appendix D: Voice Project Participants 302

Eric Report Resume. 306

SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND MAJOR PROBLEM. "An Experiment in Teaching Writing to College Freshmen," (Voice Project), developed out of four meetings of educators and writers: a meeting of the Panel on Educational Research and Development held in Washington in May, 1965; a two-week seminar held at Tufts University in September, 1965; a meeting of writers held at Sarah Lawrence College in February, 1966; and a second writers' meeting held at Columbia University in March, 1966. Supported by the U. S. Office of Education and hosted by the Stanford English Department, the project allowed a group of teachers who were themselves writers (from Stanford but also from other colleges and universities) and an equal number of graduate students along with one hundred student volunteers to work together experimentally within the framework of the Stanford Freshman English program. The experiment was an effort to create ways of involving the student as totally as possible in the art of writing and of helping him to discover and develop his own writing "voice." Ideas underlying the experiment were that students should develop an interest in the spoken and written language of others and an awareness of the relationship between speech and writing and between verbal expression and physical and psychological behavior.

OBJECTIVES. Main objectives were: 1) to carry on experimental teaching at the university, high school, junior high school, and elementary school levels; 2) to conduct a summer teaching project involving intensive work with Negro students whose speech and writing -- with its special problems and special richness and energy -- would be particularly important to this experiment; and 3) to assemble a preliminary body of teaching materials that would emerge from these activities.

Additional objectives were to conduct frequent staff meetings in order to compare and assess teaching activities and teachers' responses to student writing; and to conduct a series of informal seminars presided over by visiting consultants

and attended by graduate students, faculty members, and administrators from Stanford and neighboring institutions of higher learning, as well as secondary and elementary school teachers and administrators.

METHODS AND FINDINGS. Writer-teachers from a variety of universities and colleges worked within the context of the regular Freshman English program at Stanford and were each responsible for a class of twenty students. They were assisted by graduate students, from English and other areas, with whom they shared all phases of the work and attempted to achieve genuine colleagueship. A hundred students participated in the project on a volunteer basis. In the summer preceding the 1966-67 academic year, a questionnaire was sent to the entire freshman class, and out of approximately 1,300 freshmen, 500 expressed interest in working in the Voice Project. From these, we selected 100 students at random except that we preserved the general Stanford ratio of three male students for each female student and selected students so that in each class of twenty, six geographical areas of the United States were represented.

Before the beginning of the teaching year, we established relationships with the Director of the Ravenswood Children's Center in East Palo Alto and the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the Palo Alto School District to plan and receive approval for the experimental teaching we would conduct in the local schools. We also began to work on specific problems with other Stanford teachers in the Departments of English and Drama and in the School of Education, whose help and advice we continued to receive throughout the year. From the beginning we planned not only that Voice Project teachers would work in the schools but that school teachers and administrators would be involved in our special meetings on the Stanford campus. Shortly after classes began, we held an informal introductory seminar for Voice Project faculty and staff members, members of the Stanford English Department, and teachers and administrators from the schools to discuss the concept of voice and the teaching of writing.

Experimental teaching at the university, high school, junior high school, and elementary school levels. Since Voice Project classes were intended to involve the student as totally as possible in the act of writing, they depended on team teaching, on establishing total colleagueship between teachers and students, on sharing materials from class to class, and on helping the student to base his thinking and writing on as much activity as possible. In effect then, the work in the schools was hardly separable from work in the Stanford classrooms.

If some of our students were not themselves active in schools, then they carried out projects in dormitories or at home (through letters, visits).

Throughout all of our activities we were attempting to make the word "voice" meaningful and useful for the student and were attempting to clarify the implications and possibilities for this term as a teaching method. We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that this personal intonation might well relate to the diction and rhythms of his writing; that a professional writer has a kind of total presence that can be perceived and responded to as authorial "voice"; that there is a difference between "voice" and style; that reading aloud is a way to achieve dramatic comprehension of literature as well as a better understanding of what may be happening in a student's own writing. To us, then, "voice" meant: 1) personality as heard in speech, 2) the kind of understanding we are able to "hear" in the voice of someone reading aloud, 3) the author's presence that we "hear" when we read silently, and 4) the various roles we sometimes assume in writing. Most of our classes were efforts to develop these ideas.

Our classes also encouraged the student to perceive the beauties of so-called everyday language, whether spoken or written, so that he could respond to such language as if it were, in fact, a literary text. And conversely, our purpose in some classes was to help the student respond to significant literary works of art with the same intensity he was likely to bring to the language of his friends or to the language he generally heard around him. Often our efforts to develop the above specific notions or functions of "voice" were efforts to heighten perception; to make the student sensitive to other kinds of language; to help him to see behavior, physical gesture, and vocal gesture as forms of expression related to verbal language. The exercises we developed were intended to do all this.

Stanford classes. We introduced a number of exercises to illustrate realities of voice and identity. Through the use of the tape recorder we made audible the speech and personality of many different kinds of people and tried to suggest that writing at its best does in fact reveal an identifiable human personality. A representative exercise required students to try to identify characteristics of a speaker from a literal transcript of his taped voice. Then we played the taped voice, and students at once saw a discrepancy between the personality revealed in the transcript and on the tape. They then tried to write pieces in which they captured the voice they heard on the tape.

We also tried to involve students with language by reducing it to much less sophisticated forms of oral expression and also by making students sensitive to the idea of non-verbal sounds as language. For example, we asked students to see how much they could say with the expletive "uh-huh" and to consider how different kinds of shouts conveyed different meanings.

Classes were also intended to help students read more critically and with greater personal commitment. Reading exercises used in these classes depended on concepts of voice. In a typical exercise we asked students to take a line of dialogue from a novel out of context and invent speakers and contexts and then asked each student to "say" something more than the actual denotative content of the sentence itself. Other students then "translated" intonation into meaning. As the group participated in this semi-acting game, we taped each reading, kept individual lists of characteristics of the invented speakers, defended our particular descriptions, at times playing back the readings in question in order to substantiate or refute given perceptions and interpretations. By a kind of process of elimination, the students came to see how context controlled our understanding of this speaker in the particular novel.

We often attempted to arrive at a reading of a poem by writing in-class personal impressions of the world the poem evoked or by asking students to read the poem aloud and taping and playing back their readings. When there was a recording of the poet reading his own poem, we used this as an additional guide to our response. We also worked with children's poetry, enabling us to study the elements of poetry in their simplest forms.

Despite our interest in reading and in helping the student develop his appreciation and understanding of literature, our obvious commitment was to the student's own writing. And we were most interested in the tape recorder as a teaching aid for the ways it might help the student to improve his writing. In the course of the year we found the tape recorder to be an effective device for allowing the student to 1) hear himself reading aloud his written work and thereby perceive more directly and dramatically its effects on the reader, 2) attempt to imitate in writing the sound of his own speaking voice, 3) imitate the sudden emergence of strong rhythms in his writing, 4) compose orally or, at least, "talk out" the content of a particular piece of writing in order to learn whether he had in fact discovered his true subject and whether he was being true to his subject. The tape recorder, then, was used as an aid to the student both in writing and in revising.

We also directed our students' writing efforts by continually discussing their work in terms of "voice." For example, in a single paper we might identify such incompatible voices as: a) an adult voice that seemed to be the writer's own, b) an adult voice that tended toward banal abstraction and seemed quite alien to the writer's personality, and c) a child's voice which in itself tended to split into different kinds of childlike perceptions and conflicted with the other writing voices in the paper.

Most of this work on writing took place with small groups of from five to seven students. However, especially toward the end of the year, we also conducted semi-tutorial groups involving a teacher and two students. Here one student functioned as writer and the other as critic, while the teacher became prompter or moderator. In these sessions we taped readings, had the writer talk out materials and discussed the piece. Then all three of us attempted to write revisions of it.

Secondary and Elementary School Classes. Approximately one-third of Voice Project freshmen participated in experimental teaching projects in schools. Generally, our students worked in teams of two or three students, were for the most part accompanied in their work by a writer-teacher or a graduate assistant, and spent from one to two hours a week in the classes with younger students. Though they were not always able to assume the taxing role of teacher, most of our students did serve as discussion leaders, and most of them devoted pre-class time to the preparation of teaching materials. Students also wrote critical comments on work produced in schools.

Most of this teaching was done in small groups of from six to ten younger students. In only two cases were the classes creative writing classes. Otherwise the Voice Project teams worked with students ranging from pre-school disadvantaged students at the Ravenswood Child Care Center to second and third grade students at De Anza School to somewhat uncommitted eighth grade students at Terman Junior High School to a mixed group of students with above-average abilities at Gunn High School to a group of sophomore students at Cubberley High School.

The teachers who helped us carry out Voice Project work with younger students exempted their students from their own English classes during one or two hours of Voice Project work each week. Teachers chose students for this exemption either on the basis of the student's special gifts, or on the basis of his language deficiences and, hence, on the very real need that the student might have for this kind of concentrated effort.

Naturally much of the activity in the high schools was similar to that in the Stanford classes. However, our efforts were at times more specifically aimed at clarifying and expressing ideas of voice for these younger students. Yet we often tried to use materials of these students' world. For example, one teacher worked with the music of Bob Dylan, Simon and Garfunkel, and others. He used their songs to get at the idea of voice and compared songs of Bob Dylan with the protest poetry of Yeats and Blake.

The procedures at Terman Junior High School were slightly different. Much of the work there was carried out on a small group basis so that one Stanford student working with two eighth-graders would write comments on their work, which would then be discussed in terms of voice. Furthermore, these students finally responded well to dramatic improvisation and developed interest in reading and critical perception by acting out impromptu semi-fictionalized episodes from American history.

At De Anza Elementary School and the Ravenswood Child Care Center, work was much less structured. This work with younger children was of obvious benefit to Stanford students, who were constantly exposed firsthand to the fact that much of the child's use of language and many of his fantasy-making impulses at least suggest qualities that can be found in adult literature. But exactly what we brought to the younger children in this year of work is unfortunately less clear. At any rate in De Anza classes our students worked with the children and encouraged them to tape-record small group dialogues, to adopt roles and try to communicate in invented language, etc.

Summer teaching project. The summer phase of the Voice Project was an integral part of the College Readiness Program at the College of San Mateo, which brought sixty-five Negro high-school graduates from San Mateo County to the campus for course work, tutoring, and work-study jobs for a six-week period from June 26 to August 4. As part of their preparation for entering the College of San Mateo in the fall, each of these students was required to take a special non-credit course in English. The Voice Project provided the English class for thirty of the sixty-five students.

Our summer staff consisted of two Stanford graduate students and seven Stanford undergraduates who had been in the Voice Project at Stanford and had taught in the local schools throughout the year. The San Mateo students were divided into three groups, as was our staff. Each of the three Stanford teaching teams operated autonomously, the entire staff meeting formally twice a week to exchange ideas and discuss mutual problems. All of the undergraduates worked closely together so that there existed a constant dialogue about successful and unsuccessful teaching units and teaching techniques. Classes met for an hour and a half a day, five days a week.

The San Mateo students had been average students in remedial and non-academic high school courses. Their average reading speed was less than 180 words a minute. They had experienced so much failure in school and had been told so often that they should not take difficult courses that most of them had little or no self-confidence. Obviously the attitude of these students toward school was generally negative, and they resented being forced to attend what they thought would be dull, irrelevant courses taught by condescending white teachers.

Our objectives for the summer (to help the student discover the excitement of spoken and written language, etc.) were similar to those we attempted to carry out at Stanford. But in the summer program we tried especially to find ways to help build the student's confidence in himself by working with his own language and demonstrating what he himself could do with it, to remove fear and punishment from the task of writing, and to eliminate negative attitudes toward teachers by participating with the students in each assignment and in-class exercise.

The summer project met with considerable success. Our staff extended and deepened their teaching skills and social awareness, our methods and materials engaged Negro students and helped to make writing and speaking for them both pleasurable and serious.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS. Even though this first year was devoted to exploration rather than to precise evaluation, it is still clear that we were more successful in achieving some objectives than others. In general, "voice" did in fact serve as a "focus of multiform innovation." Throughout this year we stimulated interest in writing on the Stanford campus and in the local schools and involved many different kinds of teachers and students in our efforts. In teaching experimental classes we were not able to provide materials and circumstances which involved large numbers of students in the creation of games and compositions based on recorded sounds and visual materials, nor did we explore dramatic techniques as fully as we might have. This general inability to develop forms of expression analogous to writing was a special problem at elementary and pre-school levels, where we probably did not contribute as much to the lives of younger students as we learned from them. Further, we had intended giving these younger students anthologies of their spoken compositions, but the pressures of the year precluded this possibility. These ideas deserve more work in the future.

Then, too, our efforts to help our Stanford students to function at least in part as teachers in the schools were sometimes less effective than they might have been due to the necessary flexibility and spontaneity of the first year. That is, some of the less structured teaching moments were difficult for the students and a more precise ordering of future materials is probably desirable.

Throughout the year we attempted to introduce popular materials into our classes and, as indicated in the summaries of experimental classes, tried to help our students to read with greater precision and dramatic involvement. At best we were partially successful in these efforts. We feel that future programs should concentrate especially on exploring popular culture as a subject worthy of intensive and imaginative study.

It goes without saying that the most important aspect of this project was the use of the concept of voice and the use of recording devices to help students at different educational levels and of different social backgrounds to write more effectively. Involved in this specific effort were various aims:

1) To compare qualities of personality revealed in a person's speech with corresponding qualities evident in his writing.

2) to enable students to read aloud repeatedly and listen back to their writing in order to discover such things as changes in voice, evasiveness, etc.

3) To enable the student to "talk out" certain materials he has written about in order to discover new materials and new attitudes.

4) To encourage students to record the speech of other people which they may then study.

5) To study the similarities and differences between the qualities of the speaker's voice audible in a tape recording and the qualities apparent in a transcript of the recording.

6) To involve the student in group discussions and group story-telling sessions so that he may listen back to this speech and study it in relationship to the speech of the other participants in the group.

7) To hear varying interpretations of their own writing.

For the writers and teachers participating in this project the year's work at Stanford substantiates the value of some of our initial broad assumptions: that students should be encouraged to teach or tutor as part of their college experience; that writing should in fact be taught in college and should involve writers, teachers of widely differing experience, or simply anyone interested in teaching writing; and finally, that to teach writing by working with the relationship between speech and writing has significant possibilities of developing the verbal abilities of students at all educational levels.

But the year's work was only a start which now suggests more clearly the considerable amount of work to be done in the future. Despite this present year of Voice Project work, and all that we know about rhetoric as well as new developments in linguistics, it seems safe to say that there will never be any one way to teach writing and, further, that we really do not know very much about this process. Further work should probably be viewed first in terms of consortia of people and institutions or special centers or organizations within institutions.

In subsequent programs similar to this one, evaluative studies should be conducted within the classes; ideas and exercises should be further refined with particular emphasis on the use of materials at different age levels and with students of different language backgrounds. Future projects should include on their staff not only writer-teachers but also psychologists whose interest in language, group behavior, and learning processes should help to define concepts of voice more specifically. Throughout this year we have in fact used such concepts actively and effectively, and yet we have not documented psychologically the existence of what we call the "writing voice." Both for the sake of teaching reading as well as writing, we should probably devise a series of psychological exercises based, for instance, on different examples of a writer's prose, in order to substantiate still more concretely the concept of voice. But specific research should be conducted, at least in part by writers and psychologists together, on such subjects as gesture in speech, personality in speech, and prose rhythm.

THE VOICE PROJECT AT STANFORD

By John Hawkes

"An Experiment in Teaching Writing to College Freshmen,"[*] known on the Stanford campus as the "Voice Project," was organized as a relatively large-scale effort to create new ways of involving the student as totally as possible in the act of writing and of helping him to discover and develop his own writing voice. Supported by the U. S. Office of Education and hosted by Stanford University, the project allowed a group of teachers who were themselves writers (from Stanford but also from other colleges and universities) and an equal number of graduate students along with one hundred student volunteers to work together experimentally within the framework of the Stanford Freshman English Program. The results of the effort -- samples of student writing, transcripts of taped classroom discussions, transcripts of tapes collected or prepared by students, dialogues selected from meetings conducted by consultants, etc. -- have been arranged chronologically in the present collection so as to document what went on in the classroom, how our students taught in local schools, how we encouraged students to write and revise their work, the kind of teaching a group of our students undertook in a special summer program for entering Negro students at the College of San Mateo. We have assembled this collection as a final report to the Office of Education, but also in the hopes that it will be of use to writing teachers in schools as well as colleges.

In the first part of this collection we have included four papers written at the Tufts Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Instruction held in August, 1965. These papers (by Walter J. Ong, S.J., Benjamin DeMott, Albert J. Guerard, and myself) amplify the background of the project we created at Stanford. The second part of the collection, "The Classroom Experience," is a reconstruction of classes as detailed as we could possibly make it. It seemed best to follow a single section through the year, and to supplement this record with representative logs describing other Voice Project sections. Here clarity was generally more important that literalness, and in many instances we made extensive editorial changes in transcriptions of discussions taped in class. "Work in the Schools," the third part of this collection, is similar to "The Classroom Experience," except that, of course, it exposes some different problems and achievements. The fourth part, "Summer Program," is, we think, unique and extremely important. Here a single essay and four reconstructed classes become a final microcosm for the aims and work we generally attempted to carry out through the year. And it is fitting that these aims and this work culminate in inventive teaching that came about in part because of the special needs and gifts of the Negro pre-college student. Finally, the last part of the collection includes a substantial sampling of student writing. We have devoted space to these materials because this writing has its own value. But the section also documents the progress of several students, implies what results might be expected from certain assignments, and finally dramatizes a few ideas about revision. Four appendices include a report by a visitor to the Voice Project from the Foothill College English Department; our original description of proposed work in the local schools along with some model teaching units; transcriptions of dialogues from several meetings with consultants; and a list of participants in the project.

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These sections make it clear, I think, that we tried to bring to the problem of teaching writing one fairly original concept and invented a series of original exercises -- all of which pleased us to varying degrees at the time and still suggest more for the future. But the collection should also make it clear that many people contributed to this project -- directly or indirectly -- and that we tried to exploit all the ideas we could, whether they were new or old.

Now, having relived the year, so to speak, in these summer weeks with a staff committed to compiling and editing this collection (from thousands of feet of tape and whole archives of photocopied manuscript pages), we find that two achievements emerge in a kind of bold relief: through various uses of tape recorders we helped students to care about writing and to write more effectively; and we helped to achieve in this one instance an essential and creative reciprocity between college work and school work, college thinking and school thinking. Perhaps this is one more example or sign that in the future massive collaboration between all kinds of teachers and students and institutes -- including community groups and schools -- may yet be possible.

BACKGROUND AND MAJOR PROBLEMS UNDER CONSIDERATION

The Voice Project emerged as an idea at a meeting of the Panel on Educational Research and Development in Washington in May, 1965.[*] At the Tufts Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Instruction, this idea was discussed and expanded by members of the English Group until it assumed a crudely written shape (in my own paper mentioned above) which became the basis for the formal proposal submitted to the Office of Education. At two follow-up meetings for writers held early in 1966 at Sarah Lawrence College and Columbia University, the idea was reinforced while we accumulated further examples of the kinds of teaching we wanted to try.

The major problems we attempted to confront this year are summed up in four of the nine English Group papers written and discussed in panel sessions during the final days of the Tufts Seminar, and included as the first part of this collection.

"Report of the Working Committee on English, Literature, and the Arts," prepared by Walter J. Ong, S.J., summarizes how the English Group (which happily was not limited to members of college English departments) dealt with and sometimes fought over its two main immediate interests -- the dismal state of graduate education, and the equally dismal and frustrating subject generally known as Freshman English; "Last Try," by Benjamin DeMott, is both an assault on the academic hierarchy and a plea for a new kind of life in college teaching, and generally conveys what many of us finally took to be the desirable spirit or style of "radical innovation in education" (as it was termed by Albert J. Guerard); "Institutes for Literary Studies," by Albert J. Guerard, describes the problems of graduate education, proposes a close relationship between gradate teaching and teaching writing to first-year college students, and outlines a program for a new kind of graduate degree; and finally, my own report, "The Voice Project -- and Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing," is a personal view of writing and teaching writing, and is, of course, the preliminary statement of the ideas in our formal proposal to the Office of Education.

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[*] This panel, under the chairmanship of Jerrold R. Zacharias, is a subgroup of the President's Science Advisory Committee and reports to the Special Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, the Director of the National Science Foundation, and the U.S. Commissioner of Education. Recently the panel has concentrated on special problems in higher education.

This report made a distinction between voice as speech and the voice we hear in writing, suggested that in writing, "voice" might be taken as the whole presence of the writer, and proposed that the college student base his writing at least in part on his own speech and also develop an interest in the spoken and written language of others (including younger children) which the college student himself would collect on tape.

I should say now that the concept of "voice," along with the difference between voice and style and the various practical ways of using "voice" as a teaching concept, actually occupied us throughout this year. Certainly it took this year to determine exactly how a student could "develop an interest in the speech of others," exactly how he could collect samples of speech, exactly what the benefits of all this might be. At any rate, and despite certain confusions and vagueness in this initial statement, the main ideas of focusing on speech and on the relationship between speech and writing, and further of attempting to create writing classes that would in some ways employ the theories and techniques of the theater, were generally endorsed by the Tufts English Group as strong and manageable possibilities for overcoming some of the limitations of the more conventional rhetorical approaches to the teaching of writing and for enabling the student to write not "machine prose" (as Albert Guerard called "voiceless" writing) but a kind of prose that was identifiable as the student's own.

There was general agreement among the Tufts Seminar participants that nothing less than a revolution in present literary taste and values as well as in our ideas about language is needed if higher education is not to become increasingly remote from life itself and increasingly meaningless to younger people. And further, there was general agreement that we should in fact continue to try to teach writing in college and that merely to abandon so-called Freshman English would solve nothing (though we all considered such words as "Freshman," (Freshman English," etc., to be deplorable); that writers -- poets, fiction writers, playwrights, essayists -- should be involved in the teaching of writing; and finally, that it made sense to focus on problems of writing in the first year of college, but that we could not really begin to help the student make writing an effective, pleasurable and truly necessary part of his life without the help of teachers from many fields and a total collaboration between teachers and students from elementary school to graduate school.

By the end of the Tufts Seminar, then, it appeared likely that an experimental writing project using "Voice as focus of multiform innovation" (as Father Ong described it) would receive federal support and that a possible host institution might be Stanford, where Albert Guerard had already begun to develop a new Freshman English program, which he was then directing.

OBJECTIVES

Our main objectives were: 1) to carry on experimental teaching at the university, high school, junior high school and elementary school levels; 2) to conduct a summer teaching project involving intensive work with Negro students whose speech and writing -- with its special problems and special richness and energy -- would be particularly important to this experiment; and 3) to assemble a preliminary body of teaching materials that would emerge from these activities. Such materials would include descriptions of experiments, tapes, scripts, and logs of students' and teachers' responses to the various experiments. Additional objectives were to conduct frequent staff meetings in order to compare and assess teaching activities and teachers' responses to student writing; and to conduct a series of informal seminars presided over by visiting consultants and attended by graduate students, faculty members, and administrators from Stanford and neighboring institutions of higher learning, as well as secondary and elementary school teachers and administrators. (See Appendix C.)

METHODS AND FINDINGS

Structure of the Experiment. The experiment was conducted within the context of the required Freshman English course. At the outset, it was agreed that the teaching in this experiment was intended to fulfill the general objectives of Freshman English, which, as expressed by Albert Guerard, were "to develop the ability to write effectively and the ability to read literature with discernment and pleasure." On the other hand, the particular nature of the project created special staffing and teaching problems and requirements. Among these were: 1) that the writer-teachers involved in the project be recruited from a variety of colleges and universities as well as from Stanford; 2) that each of these writer-teachers devote full time to his class of twenty students; 3) that each writer-teacher carry out his work with the help of a graduate assistant with whom he would share all phases of the work and with whom he would attempt to achieve genuine colleagueship; 4) that the graduate-assistants be drawn at least in part from areas other than English; and 5) that students participate in the project on a volunteer basis.

In addition to their team teaching and their attendance at staff meetings of the regular Freshman English staff, writer-teachers and graduate assistants in the project had four other obligations: 1) to attend Voice Project staff meetings on a regular weekly basis in order to discuss and compare teaching methods and materials; 2) to visit and consult with local school faculties and individual teachers involved in the experiment's special projects; 3) to participate in these special projects by assisting small groups of college freshmen to teach in the local secondary and elementary schools; and 4) to participate in seminars and informal discussions conducted by consultants to the project.

Shortly after the approval of our proposal by the Office of Education, we gathered a staff consisting of seven writer-teachers in addition to myself (and representing such diverse institutions of higher education as Harvard, Wellesley, San Francisco State, and The City College of the City University of New York), along with nine assistants who were doing graduate work in English, history, communications, education, and creative writing. The rest of the staff included an administrative assistant and a secretary.

In the summer preceding this 1966-67 year a questionnaire was sent to the entire freshman class giving them a series of Freshman English options. Out of approximately 1,300 freshmen, 500 expressed interest in working in the Voice Project, and from these we selected 100 students to participate in the program. This selection was made at random except that we preserved the general Stanford ratio of three male students for each female student and selected students so that in each class of twenty, six geographical areas of the United States were represented.

Before the beginning of the teaching year, we established close working relationships with Lee Swenson, Director of the Ravenswood Children's Center in

East Palo Alto and with John Martin, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction in the Palo Alto School District; and received approval from the English Steering Committee of the Palo Alto School District to conduct experimental team-teaching in Cubberley High School, Gunn High School, Terman Junior High School, and De Anza Elementary School. We also began to work on specific problems with other Stanford teachers in the Departments of English and Drama and in the School of Education, whose help and advice we continued to receive throughout the year. From the beginning we planned not only that Voice Project teachers would work in the schools but that school teachers and administrators would be involved in our special meetings on the Stanford campus. (For a description of the project prepared for the local school district, see Appendix B.)

In October, shortly after classes began, we held our first informal, introductory seminar devoted to the problems of "voice" and the teaching of writing. Albert Guerard spoke on "voice" as a means of critical approach in Milton's and Wordsworth's poetry and Conrad's fiction. Voice Project faculty and staff members of the Stanford English Department, along with teachers and administrators from the schools, attended the meeting. Mr. Guerard illustrated the notion that there are "natural rhythms in speech and that good writing always preserves these rhythms to one degree or another" and, perhaps more important, always reflects "the persuasive movement of consciousness."

A few days after this meeting, Miles Putnam, Acting Chairman of the English Department of Cubberley High School, wrote a letter summarizing his view of the ideas and possibilities of the Voice Project as they had emerged for him during those first hours we spent together in a group effort:

> The Voice Project -- correct me if I'm wrong -- is based on several assumptions. One is that spoken American English has developed certain patterns of speech that are both rhythmical and euphonious. Another is that written language, while it does not duplicate oral language, must retain and perhaps refine and discipline those patterns of speech. A third is that these patterns can be defined. And a fourth is that a student can learn to preserve the patterns in his writing. If he can learn, then his writing, even if it is a course description in the Stanford catalog, will obviously have been written by a person, not a machine....
>
> What should we do? First off, do what you are starting to do. Ask students to listen to themselves, to compose orally, to revise written composition after hearing themselves read what they've written. Next we ought to collect individual sentences that were at first awkward but after oral reading were revised into effective sentences. We ought to see what happens to modification, to transitions, to syntax, to diction, to emphasis.

> I can see several dimensions to the project. (1) Sensitivity training. Your article "The Voice Project in the Local Schools" gives some good suggestions. These ideas could be expanded to include all kinds of appeals to the various senses, touch, smell, etc. What are your authors doing along this line in their Freshman composition classes? Aren't there many games that could be devised for elementary school students? Shouldn't these experiences be continued through high school, building more and more perceptive, concrete, verbal responses? (2) Language games. For instance, Priscilla Tyler's blocks for the elementary school can teach order and rhythm in language. (3) Oral work in revising writing. (4) The audience for whom the college (high school, junior high, elementary) student writes. How does a student keep a human being in the writing that he does for Prof. MacDonald of the Educational Psychology Dept. or for the reader of his Subject A exam? (5) Literary studies.

Mr. Putnam's letter suggests some of the things we did in fact attempt to do in our single year, as well as certain kinds of work that should be done in the future.

The year's activities can best be discussed under the categories of our objectives of the first year:

A. To carry on experimental teaching at the university, high school, junior high school, and elementary school levels. As stated earlier, Voice Project classes were intended to involve the student as totally as possible in the act of writing; therefore, they depended on team teaching, on establishing total colleagueship between teachers and students, on sharing materials from class to class, and on helping the student to base his thinking and writing on as much activity as possible. In effect, then, the work in the schools was hardly separable from work in the Stanford classrooms. If some of our students were not themselves active in schools, then they carried out projects in dormitories or at home (through letters, visits) and at least based part of their thinking and writing on similar activities carried out by other students. Voice Project Teachers visited each other's classes often, and teaching exercises were literally developed from one class to another.

Throughout all of our activities we were attempting to make the word "voice" meaningful and useful for the student and were attempting to clarify the implications and possibilities for this term as a teaching method. We wanted the student to know that the sound of his voice conveys something of his personality; that this personal intonation might well relate to the diction and rhythms of his writing; that a professional writer has a kind of total presence that can be perceived and responded to as authorial "voice"; that there is a difference between "voice" and style; that reading aloud is a way to achieve dramatic comprehension of literature as well as a better understanding of what may be happening in a student's own writing. To us, then, "voice" meant: 1) personality as heard in speech, 2) the kind of understanding we are able to "hear" in the voice of someone reading aloud, 3) the author's presence that we "hear" when we read silently, and 4) the various roles we sometimes assume in writing. Most of our classes were efforts to develop these ideas.

Our classes also encouraged the student to perceive the beauties of so-called everyday language, whether spoken or written, so that he could respond to such language as if it were, in fact, a literary text. And, conversely, our purpose in some classes was to help the student respond to significant literary works of art with the same intensity he was likely to bring to the language of his friends or to the language he generally heard around him. Often our efforts to develop the above specific notions or functions of "voice" were efforts to heighten perception; to make the student sensitive to other kinds of language; to help him to see behavior, physical gesture, and vocal gesture as forms of expression related to verbal language. The exercises we developed were intended to do all this.

Stanford classes. Before the beginning of Voice Project classes two staff members visited a second grade class taught by Richard Brandon at De Anza Elementary School. Mr. Brandon wanted his students to identify themselves and each other by recognizing their voices. In private he taped each child reading aloud a simple passage from a second-grade reader, and allowed the child to hear his own voice played back if he wished. (Most of the class expressed curiosity and pleasure at this prospect; yet several were quite decided in their unwillingness to hear back their own voices.) After these individual taping sessions we reassembled, and Mr. Brandon told the class that we would all listen to the tapes and try to identify the speakers. The important thing about this intense and raucous class was that the seven-year-old students began immediately to intellectualize the problem ("Machines make voices unrecognizable," "the machine will allow us to tell boys from girls, but will keep us from knowing each other," etc.), and, of course, the constant attempts to recognize each other's voice produced considerable involvement. Brandon and the Voice Project visitors also included their own voices on the tape; however, the students were unable to cope with this unexpected burden of new problems and began trying to identify the adult voices solely on the basis of logic (which man was in or out of the classroom at a certain time, etc.). And the teacher was able to demonstrate that in these moments the students had stopped listening to the voices. In the course of these visits we also listened with the rest of the children to several second-graders telling stories. And all of this activity confirmed our initial feeling that college students, interested in reading, writing, and the creative and learning processes, would find the expression of children a valuable source for their own development.

These early visits to elementary school classes were immediately responsible for several Stanford classes:

Item. Two of our first classes were modeled almost exactly on the De Anza second-grade class. In the first session we introduced students to a few crude realities of voice and identity by playing a recorded reading which was unfamiliar to students and teachers alike. (Throughout the year we tried to achieve colleagueship between ourselves and our students -- largely by sharing in outside projects or in classroom writing whenever possible.) This brief recorded selection was Katherine Anne Porter's reading of the ending of her short story "The Downward Path to Wisdom." Teachers and students together wrote free, in-class impressions of the recording, read aloud these responses, discussed such things as the quality of the woman's voice heard on the tape and whether she was supposed to be the mother of the child described in the passage, debated the woman's compassion or lack of it, discussed whether the child's isolation was typical or unusual, and debated the accuracy and value of our written responses to all of these questions. The theme of childhood -- introduced into this first class by accident -- was actually one we were concerned with all year and, familiar as it is to everyone, gave us a particularly energized basis for our initial group discussion. The mother, the child, the ironic uncle (in the short story), along with ourselves and students of vastly different backgrounds -- the speech and personalities of these many different kinds of people were made audible through use of the tape recorder. At the end of this session we taped each student individually reading a single passage chosen from a travel book. (See class of October 3 in "The Classroom Experience.")

Item. As an extension of the listening and in-class writing exercise described above, the staff correlated the recorded readings and samples of in-class writings of four students and introduced these materials at a later meeting. First, we played the four recorded voices (those of two girls and two boys) and asked the students to characterize the person reading by the qualities evident in the sound of the reader's voice. We tabulated these qualities on the blackboard as the students called them out and argued the basis for the various descriptive judgments. Next we handed out dittoed copies of the earlier writing done by these same four unidentified students and asked the group to correlate the four selections with the voices they had heard. This matching game was turbulent and grounded in pleasing immediacy. Students defended their decisions by finding correspondences between pitch, tempo and volume of the speaking voice and certain pronounced rhythms, repeated word choices and constructions, etc., in the passages of writing. Throughout this effort we warned against making hasty and superficial judgments about people on the basis of their voices and speech patterns. And yet it was at least clear that writing at its best (or even sometimes in its crudest form) does in fact reveal an identifiable human personality. (See class of October 10 in "The Classroom Experience.")

Item. We based two classes on a talk given by a graduate student in English, Roy Thomas, who visited our classes. Thomas spoke at length and conducted a taped discussion on my novel, The Lime Twig. At a subsequent meeting we gave our students dittoed copies of short excerpts from three essays on Flannery O'Connor. (One of these essays, of course, had been written by Thomas himself.) We discussed the writing voices evident in these passages, played back the tape of Roy Thomas' earlier oral presentation and asked the students to decide which of the three critical passages had been written by Mr. Thomas. In this exercise he served especially well, since he is a person of high critical intelligence whose speech is also remarkably close to the complexities of his writing. This demonstration was difficult for the students and only partially successful; nonetheless, its basic idea seems worthy of more development and refinement.

A team of two Voice Project students working in Richard Brandon's class at De Anza Elementary School tape-recorded a long interview with a seven-year-old student, John Wakabayashi, who recounted with richness, eloquence and remarkable precision some of his rather extraordinary summer adventures. This tape and the transcripts provided the basis for several classes.

Item. One of the students who had conducted the interview with John Wakabayashi distributed a portion of the transcript to the class; described the child, the classroom world, and the teacher; played a portion of the tape; engaged the class in a discussion of what they had read and heard; and then read aloud an essay he had written on Brandon's work in this particular elementary school class.

Item. In another class we introduced these same materials. And once the students had noted and discussed the discrepancy between the sound of the child's voice and the transcription of his speech, we asked them to attempt to write passages in which they rendered through written language the sound of the child's voice. Both the discussion and written work suggested that this exercise -- to imitate the "sound" of a personality -- engaged students as a more conventional exercise (say, to imitate the style of a familiar novelist) does not. (See classes of November 21 and 29 in "The Classroom Experience.")

Item. In still two more classes we introduced the transcription of John Wakabayashi's narrative, asked the students to characterize the speaker (as they had attempted to characterize themselves earlier in the year), and once more tabulated their descriptive characterizations on the blackboard. Next we played a portion of the Wakabayashi tape (not, however, the transcribed portion in which the child was telling about his summer adventure, but another passage in which he was talking about a tree in his backyard). Again we asked the students to concentrate on the difference between the speaking voice and the different kinds of language evident in the transcript and, as in the other class, asked them to write passages imitating the actual sound of the child's voice they had heard in the recording. When this class next convened, students read aloud and discussed their written renditions of John Wakabayashi's voice and discovered for one thing that a good many of them had independently and intuitively chosen to write about mythic materials -- mountains, rivers, snakes, frogs, dragons, etc. By the end of this session we concluded that this little boy was a kind of child version of an Olympian poet. For our students his speech had become an exciting text worth serious study. (See classes of January 9 and 16 in "The Classroom Experience.")

Item. Another teacher, Mark Mirsky, asked a group of his students to collect original folklore from their parents, from other students in dormitories, from unlikely places in the community -- such as a junkyard in East Palo Alto. These students did additional reading on folklore and corrected, edited, and transcribed their own tapes which were then discussed in class. Once again, the collecting process made language inseparable from actual human needs and action, and enlisted the student's literal commitment to language itself. The editing of tapes and transcripts naturally caused the students to exercise critical judgment in a practical fashion. (See "The Classroom Experience," class of February 23.) The results of this effort were so exciting that these activities, like the

Wakabayashi materials, continued to spread from class to class.

Item. We gave students a model of an authentic American folktale, and discussed at length the voices of various speakers, the transformational power of language as the speakers metamorphosed a single word "ugly" from noun to adjective to verb, the power of the extended joke to transform a human burden -- ugliness -- into a kind of magical strength and beauty. We then asked students to write their own tall tales by the next meeting.

This particular meeting was attended by several consultants and visitors -- John Hersey; Benson Snyder, Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Medical Department, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Mark Mirsky and Mitchell Goodman along with students from other classes. We passed out dittoed copies of student work, heard students read aloud their tall tales, discussed language problems and achievements evident in these pieces of writing and, finally, played a tape of one of the original pieces of folklore collected by one of the students in Mirsky's class. The purpose of this long and excited session was, once again, to make palpably real the functions and richness of certain kinds of spoken and written language, and to indicate the value of ordinary Freshman English students, moving beyond themselves through the exploitation of impulses toward exaggeration and fantasy. (See class of April 17.)

As mentioned earlier, part of our purpose was to involve students with language by reducing language to much less sophisticated forms of oral expression and also by making students sensitive to the idea of non-verbal sounds as language. Three classes illustrate this effort:

Item. Students listened to a tape-recorded "sound poem" prepared by one of our staff members and did in-class writing on the basis of what they heard. As in our first classes of the year, students and teachers were equally unfamiliar with this taped material and were able to discuss their responses on an equal basis. At the end of this particular class we introduced a high school student's short prose passage which had been based on the same tape, and then read aloud a letter written by a staff member about the tape, which she had prepared. This kind of sensory exercise seems important for all students of writing and deserves to be developed in a more structured fashion. Students should prepare their own sound compositions raising questions of tone, context, associational clusters, etc. (See Appendix B and also class of April 4.)

Item. In the middle of a class on Truman Capote's book In Cold Blood, students became interested in the way that Capote read aloud (on a record) the expletive "uh-huh." We proceeded immediately to discover exactly how much we could "say" by limiting ourselves to this expression. Students spontaneously assumed particular roles and invented specific situations which determined the meaning conveyed in their rendition of the expression. Other students "translated" the expression and tried to describe the context and role that had determined meaning. The "uh-huh" game (similar to Stanislawski's exercise for actors -- to say the word "tonight" in something like fifty different ways) is fairly primitive and childlike, but did engage the interest of the students and no doubt deserves a more structured development.

Item. Early in the year Mark Mirsky devoted a class session to performing and discussing frontier shouts with his students. He went from student to student demanding that they shout until it became apparent that students were shouting in different ways and apparently for different purposes. Mirsky then acted out for the class a series of American frontier shouts, which he related to folklore, frontier humor, and the uses of invective in writing and on the stage.

Naturally, a good many classes were intended to help students read more critically and with greater personal commitment, and the reading exercises used in these classes depended on concepts of voice:

Item. Again, in the process of working on Capote's In Cold Blood, a student conducted a discussion based on comparing a record of Capote reading from the story "Children on Their Birthdays" with stylistic qualities, rather than voice, which seemed to be related to various problems in In Cold Blood. The class discussed the characteristics of Capote's reading voice and his fictional language, and came to the conclusion that in this writer, "voice" becomes a matter of aesthetic sensibility and that in his non-fiction, aesthetic sensibility is likely to be inappropriate at times to the reality he attempts to recreate. Here questions of voice took us to an extensive scrutiny of a crucial figure of speech. (See class of November 7.)

Item. In working with Faulkner's short novel Old Man, we took a particular line of dialogue out of context and asked students to invent speakers and contexts and (as in the "uh-huh" game) asked each student to "say" something more than the actual denotative content of the sentence itself. Other students then "translated" intonation into meaning. As the group participated in this semi-acting game, we taped each reading, kept individual lists of characteristics of the invented speakers, defended our particular descriptions, at times playing back the readings in question in order to substantiate or refute given perceptions and interpretations. By a kind of process of elimination, the students came to see how context controlled our understanding of this speaker in Faulkner's novel. (See class of November 23.)

We approached the study of poetry in several different ways.

Item. We gave students copies of a short poem by the English poet George MacBeth, "A Child's Garden," which among other things contributed still further depth to the year's childhood theme. We attempted to arrive at a reading of this poem by writing in-class personal impressions of the world it evokes by asking the students to read the poem aloud and taping and playing back their readings. (In this class, the students who responded to the poem superficially in writing also responded to it without feeling or understanding in their reading, and conversely those students who reflected intuitively some aspect of the poem in their written impressions also read the poem aloud with at least the beginnings of understanding and expressiveness.) Next we discussed a tape of MacBeth reading a very different poem of his ("The Owl") that, nonetheless, bore a close resemblance in theme and attitude to "A Child's Garden," and used this reading as an additional guide to our responses. Finally, we listened to a tape of the poet reading "A Child's Garden" itself. (See class of January 26.)

Item. We asked students to turn in poems if they wished to do so and asked them to write brief prose descriptions of the origins of their poems. Then students and writer-teachers, along with John Barth, who at the time was a consultant to the project, individually prepared dramatic readings of a student's poem. These readings revealed the strengths and weaknesses of the poem and also made it clear that the student's own reading of her poem was the most effective.

Item. After Herbert Kohl's visit we based a class on two poems that were written by eleven-year-old girls and that were both quoted and discussed in his article, "Children Writing: The Story of an Experiment" in the New York Review of Books (November 17, 1966). Here we chanted the poems, beat out their rhythms, and proceeded from a discussion of ellipses and crude metaphoric expression to a consideration of the far more complex thinking evident in a brief prose passage written by another Negro child. We worked with this passage by distributing a "voiceless" version of it -- a version which we had written in banal and monotonous prose, destroying the unique constructions and figures of speech in the original -- and then asking students to rewrite this version so that it would reveal a recognizable speaker. (See class of March 7.)

Despite our interest in reading and in helping the student develop his appreciation and understanding of literature, our obvious commitment was to the student's own writing. And we were most interested in the tape recorder as a teaching aid for the ways it might help the student to improve his writing. In the course of the year we found the tape recorder to be an effective device for allowing the student to 1) hear himself reading aloud his written work and thereby perceive more directly and dramatically its effects on the reader, 2) attempt to imitate in writing the sound of his own speaking voice, 3) imitate the sudden emergence of strong rhythms in his writing, 4) compose orally or, at least, "talk out" the content of a particular piece of writing in order to learn whether he had in fact discovered his true subject and whether he was being true to his subject. The tape recorder, then, was used as an aid to the student both in writing and revising.

Item. A student read aloud a paper she had written in response to an assignment to write a letter that could not be sent. By listening repeatedly to brief portions of this tape, the several other students in the group were able to single out moments when changes in the writer's voice indicated that she was evading certain important ideas implicit in her writing. Before the session ended, the writer herself responded with sudden excitement to the tape and to these critical ideas. (See class of October 25.)

Item. One of our students led a discussion about several passages from original essays and revisions by a student whose initial work had been marred by considerable confusion and lack of identity. Earlier in the year this particular student had used a tape recorder to "talk out" one of his prose passages and, in the process, had discovered certain important concrete details from his past experience. These the writer had so concentrated on that they became the source of much of his later writing and helped him to create his own recognizable writing voice. The student leading the discussion attempted to trace this development through the passages.

Item. We based one class on a consideration of a student's original essay and on a series of revisions which had been prepared in several taping sessions. One of these revisions was written after the student recorded for approximately five minutes a single sentence displaying strong characteristic rhythms, and then replayed the recording several times. The new piece of writing had throughout a totally new kind of rhythmical coherence. (See class of April 23.)

We also directed our students' writing efforts by continually discussing their work in terms of "voice."

Item. For one staff meeting we read in advance and wrote comments on a paper that one of our graduate assistants had found especially difficult to react to. After the staff discussion, the graduate student conducted his class in such a way that the students themselves, along with the writer, concluded that in this writing there were three incompatible voices: a) an adult voice that seemed to be the writer's own, b) an adult voice that tended toward banal abstraction and seemed quite alien to the writer's personality, and c) a child's voice which in itself tended to split into different kinds of childlike perceptions and conflicted with the other writing voices in the paper. (See class of November 15.)

Most of this work took place with small groups of from five to seven students. However, especially toward the end of the year, we also conducted semi-tutorial groups involving a teacher and two students. Here one student functioned as writer and the other as critic, while the teacher became prompter or moderator. In these sessions we taped readings, had the writer talk out materials, and discussed the piece. Then all three of us attempted to write revisions of it. (See classes of May 8 - 18.)

Secondary and Elementary School Classes. Approximately one-third of Voice Project freshmen participated in experimental teaching projects in schools. Generally, our students worked in teams of two or three students, were for the most part accompanied in their work by a writer-teacher or a graduate assistant, and spent from one to two hours a week in the classes with younger students. Though they were not always able to assume the taxing role of teacher, most of our students did serve as discussion leaders, and most of them were admirably conscientious in devoting pre-class time to the preparation of teaching materials. Students also wrote critical comments on work produced in schools.

Most of this teaching was done in small groups of from six to ten younger students. In only two cases, at Cubberley High School and Ravenswood High School, were the classes creative writing classes. Otherwise the Voice Project teams worked with students ranging from pre-school disadvantaged students at the Ravenswood Child Care Center to second and third grade students at De Anza School to a somewhat mixed group of eighth grade students with above-average abilities at Gunn High School to a group of sophomore students at Cubberley High School. Naturally, much of the activities in schools was similar to that in the Stanford classes. However, our efforts in the schools were at times more specifically aimed at clarifying and expressing ideas of voice for these younger students.

The kinds of activities carried out in the high schools depended on the extent to which Stanford students were successful in using materials from their own classes and from classes they conducted in the local schools, as well as on suggestions mady by consultants. Their activities depended further on how the school teachers themselves were already shaping language materials for their students. For instance, at Cubberley High School, Dale Leslie had been concerned with the concept of voice in reading for at least the past two years so that those of her students with whom we worked were familiar with basic ideas of how to respond to a "speaker" in a work of literature. Similarly, at Gunn High School John Turner worked with translations so as to expand his students' awareness of how different people in different cultures might express a similar idea or feeling. These schools, then, were somewhat oriented along Voice Project lines at the outset, so it was possible for us to work with students already prepared, to one degree or another, to respond to some of the methods we wished to explore. Nonetheless, considerable inventiveness seemed necessary to involve these students more specifically in an awareness of voice in the process of writing. Our impression throughout the year, incidentally, was that both students and teachers welcomed additional opportunity to concentrate on writing.

It should be noted here that the teachers who helped us carry out Voice Project work with younger students exempted their students from their own English classes during the one or two hours of Voice Project work each week. Teachers chose students for this exemption either on the basis of the student's special gifts, or on the basis of his language deficiencies and, hence, on the very real need that the student might have for this kind of concentrated effort. It should also be noted here that when our college freshmen were not able to assume thoroughly the role of teacher, it was partly because of their closeness in age to the high school students. On the other hand, in many instances, this closeness of age seemed to produce a new kind of teaching situation in which college freshmen and high school seniors or even sophomores worked together in an atmosphere of uninhibited equality and collaboration.

Item. In order to introduce high school students to the concept of voice in writing, we devoted at least one session to the discussion of a single paragraph that had been written by a Stanford student and that revealed three or four different "voices." We passed out dittoed copies of this passage, and the college freshman who was conducting the discussion that day asked one of the high school students to read the passage aloud. The Stanford student then asked the high school group whether they heard in this passage one voice or several. The high school students were unanimous in defining perhaps four different kinds of role-playing (voices) in the passage: "privilege of being" they defined as the embarrassed or sentimental or unmeant rhetoric of a speechmaker and went on to point out that the speaker of this phrase was quite literally standing at a remote distance from his audience (the reader); "summer of sweet ironies" they defined as an expression that might be spoken by a romanticist who might also be rather feminine in his thinking and feeling. Here they decided that the speaker had, in the words of one of the students, "jumped from the distant stage into the middle of the audience." The word "alienation" suggested the remote and impersonal role of the psychologist for social scientist or teacher; "heights and depths of emotion" was defined as cliched "literary voice," but was at least free from self-consciousness. In the last few lines of this passage the students thought they heard the emergence of the writer's own voice. All in all, the students came to realize how they could in fact "hear" what they read and, further, came to realize that uncertainty was likely to produce shifting voices in prose. One student summed up this particular college writer's problem with considerable perception, understanding, and charity when she said that obviously the experience was deeply important to the writer but that he simply had not yet discovered what he actually thought and felt about it, that he was in fact still too involved in the experience himself to handle it effectively in writing.

Item. As a result of attending a meeting conducted by Herbert Kohl when he was a consultant to the project, Peggy Glenn, a teacher at Ravenswood High School, invented a writing experiment for her own class. She played brief recordings of Carl Sandburg and Langston Hughes reading their work and then told her students to write whatever they wanted to, assuring them that these passages would not be criticized for misspelling, poor grammar, etc., and would not be graded. One student wrote a short, highly imaginative personal essay on his hands. This passage was so direct, powerful, and unusual that we made it in turn the basis of an in-class writing exercise in our own high school groups and at Stanford. That is, we asked students to write about a physical aspect of themselves.

Item. We also approached the high school students' own world through the music of Bob Dylan, Simon and Garfunkel, and others. Stanford and high school students brought to class for discussion a protest song by Bob Dylan and later compared this song with the protest poetry of Yeats and Blake. One of our graduate assistants challenged the high school students by suggesting that Dylan writes imprecise poetry, creates artificial syntax in the interest of rhyme, and mixes "voices." We were pleased that the students defended their own views with vigor and intelligence.

In still two other classes we distributed dittoed copies of songs on the same theme by Leadbelly and Bob Dylan and, before hearing these songs, encouraged students to respond purely to situation, speaker, and language. In this case the students themselves decided that Leadbelly's relationship to his materials and audience was clearly defined in the way that Dylan's was not, and that this accounted in part for the greater depth and power of Leadbelly's ideas. When we played the two songs the music and qualities of the two singers' voices reinforced the students' reactions. As one of them said, "Leadbelly seemed to be singing directly to a few people in a shabby room, whereas Dylan appeared to be singing only to himself in a recording studio."

Item. In the schools as well as at Stanford, we found group story-telling a particularly effective means for conveying to the student certain specific qualities in his own temperament and language. The process here was to divide a group into two teams, to have them participate in a story-telling game; then to play back a recording of the game and discuss students' laughing, cutting off the speaker, etc., and finally to transcribe portions of an individual student's taped story and compare it with his writing. In most cases, we again found a decided loss between tape and transcript, but discovered also that there were certain rhythms, word choice, and grammatical constructions evident in the transcript that were evident in the student's own writing and were, perhaps, the natural foundations for his writing.

The procedures at Terman Junior High School were slightly different. Much of the work there was carried out on a small group basis so that one Stanford student working with two eighth-graders would write comments on their work, which would then be discussed in terms of voice. Furthermore, these students finally responded well to dramatic improvisation and developed interest in reading and critical perception by acting out impromptu semi-fictionalized episodes from American history. (This acting was a departure from Chamber Theater as introduced to Voice Project students by Carolyn Fitchett from Institute for Services to Education.)

At De Anza Elementary School and the Ravenswood Child Care Center, work was much less structured. This work with younger children was of obvious benefit to Stanford students, who were constantly exposed firsthand to the fact that much of the child's use of language and many of his fantasy-making impulses at least suggest qualities that can be found in adult literature. But exactly what we brought to the younger children in this year of work is unfortunately less clear. At any rate, in De Anza classes our students worked with the children in several ways:

Item. They encouraged and tape-recorded small group dialogues. For instance, they asked three children the question, "If you could have any pet in the world which pet would you want?" The children encouraged each other to greater and greater spontaneity and freshness and to greater heights of fantasy-making, questioned and argued with each other on the difference between what girls want and what boys want, and in this game-like situation finally attempted to outdo each other's verbal efforts. A result of one particular story-telling session was that a second-grade girl who had remained withdrawn throughout most of the year suddenly began to respond with animation and genuine originality.

Item. William Alfred taught second-grade children to recite lines from _Beowulf_ by translating the lines for the children, asking them how the speaker sounded (angry, sad, etc.), teaching them to pronounce the Old English on the basis of their fascination with these unfamiliar sounds, teaching them the difference between strict and formal rhythms, and finally, encouraging them to imitate in their recitation of the Old English the emotional qualities rendered by the speaker in the translation.

Item. We attempted to make children sensitive to some of the ways language works by encouraging them to adopt roles and try to communicate in invented language. One child, for example, became a Martian and made up words which the rest of the children then attempted to understand. Since the children were uncertain of the meaning of an invented word, they were forced to listen closely to its sound and the intonation of the speaker. This game changed rather quickly into a group effort to make up nonsense couplets.

B. _To conduct a summer teaching project involving intensive work with Negro students whose speech and writing -- with its special problems and special richness and energy -- would be particularly important to this experiment_. Then summer phase of the Voice Project was an integral part of the College Readiness Program at the College of San Mateo, which brought sixty-five Negro high-school graduates from San Mateo County to the campus for course work, tutoring, and work-study jobs for a six-week period from June 26 to August 4. As part of their preparation for entering the College of San Mateo in the fall, each of these students was required to take a special non-credit course in English. The Voice Project provided the equivalent of this course for thirty of the sixty-five students.

Our summer staff consisted of two Stanford graduate students and seven Stanford undergraduates who had been in the Voice Project at Stanford and had taught in the local schools throughout the year. The San Mateo students were divided into three groups, as was our staff. Each of the three Stanford teaching teams operated autonomously, the entire staff meeting formally twice a week to exchange ideas and discuss mutual problems. The undergraduates worked closely together so that there existed a constant dialogue about successful and unsuccessful teaching units and teaching techniques. Classes met for an hour and a half a day, five days a week.

The San Mateo students had been average students in remedial and non-academic high school courses. On the Nelson-Denny Reading Test they scored at the 8.5 grade level in overall reading skills. Their average reading speed was less than 180 words a minute. They had experienced so much failure in school and had been told so often that they should not take difficult courses that most of them had little or no self-confidence. Obviously the attitude of these students toward school was generally negative, and they resented being forced to attend what they thought would be dull, irrelevant courses taught by condescending white teachers.

Our objectives for the summer (to help the student discover the excitement of spoken and written language, etc.) were similar to those we attempted to carry out at Stanford. But in the summer program it was especially important that we find ways to help build the student's confidence in himself by working with his own language and demonstrating what he himself could do with it, to remove fear and punishment from the task of writing, and to eliminate negative attitudes toward teachers by participating with the students in each assignment and in-class exercise.

Item. Early in the summer each student had the opportunity to hear and comment on his own voice. Transcripts of the tapes gave the students an opportunity to read what they had said, and use of such tapes and transcripts gave the teacher the maximum opportunity to find something unique and worthwhile in each student's narrative or statement. There was no negative criticism except that which came from the class.

__Item__. As in our Stanford classes, we prepared tapes of "sound-compositions" or "sound-poems" and asked the students to react to these tapes in writing. We did change somewhat the Stanford exercises, however, in that we prepared two separate tapes each of which was played on a separate occasion. These two tapes were of contrasting subjects, and hence extended the range of the exercise. But more important was the fact that these students reacted to the first tape with predictably fixed expectations (another exasperating chore invented by remote school teachers) and wrote mere catalogs of what they heard. But by the time they were confronted unexpectedly with a new tape and repetition of this exercise on the second day, they knew that we were not testing or challenging them, that we meant them to respond freely to the materials. For the sake of comparison we prepared a catalog of these first pieces of writing arranged in sets, which we then discussed with the group.

__Item__. On one occasion we duplicated several passages by unidentified students and asked the group to determine the sex of the author. The violent discussions of whether or not a girl (or a boy) could have written a certain passage focused our attention on particular kinds of language and styles of thinking. We ended each argument with a class vote and then told them the sex of the writer. Later in the summer we specifically asked classes to keep their papers anonymous so that we could work with this matter of identifying authors if we wished. By the last week most of the students were able to recognize each other's writing, and most of them had come to know that they have a personal way of speaking and writing.

__Item__. At least in the general direction of Carolyn Fitchett's chamber theater technique, which we had tried out briefly in Stanford classes, we encouraged students to read aloud short excerpts from plays and novels. In this exercise teachers were always the first to read. And through example, rather than direction, they conveyed something of the exciting actuality of a given character and the pleasure involved in simple dramatic readings. Students began to project themselves into new roles and thereby to discover various ways people speak and sound. Eventually students themselves directed these readings. This kind of dramatic activity further helped change the student's idea of his negative or passive function in the class.

__Item__. We encouraged students to read aloud brief excerpts from current political speeches or quotations from first-person fictional narratives, to characterize the speakers in question and to support their characterizations by acting out these passages (portraying accents, emotional qualities, etc., of the speaker as they took him to be), and finally to write their own speeches on such topical issues as the Detroit riots, Mohammed Ali, etc. As in earlier classes we did not identify writers of these students' speeches so that the speeches could serve as another basis for identifying writers. (Whenever possible during the summer we used materials by writers and speakers already known to the students -- James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, Rapp Brown, Martin Luther King. We also used such periodicals as Ebony, Jet, Black Dialogue, and wherever possible included such organizations or programs of current interest as the Black Panther Party, NAACP, and the War on Poverty.)

Item. Toward the end of the summer session we prepared a simple matching game which we used in classes over a four-day period and which seemed to elicit from the students considerable perception and responsiveness. Relying largely on the resourcefulness of the Stanford students, we collected a series of quotations along with the characters or public figures who spoke the quotations (such as jet pilot, seven-year-old child, Negro minister, etc.). Students, of course, attempted to match speaker and speech and once again -- in the process of reading aloud the quotations -- learned how the sound of language, which can be the key to identifying the speaker, is determined by the arrangement, choice, and spelling of words within a given passage. The effort to differentiate between these quotations and speakers led the students to a dramatic awareness of personal styles of speech. After identifying the speaker of a particular passage and defending their judgments (partly on the basis of their own dramatic readings), the students finally wrote out a few more sentences in the voice of the identified speaker.

The summer project met with considerable success. Our staff extended and deepened their teaching skills and social awareness, our methods and materials engaged Negro students and helped to make writing and speaking for them both pleasurable and serious. The regular English staff of the College of San Mateo is considering the possibilities of continuing a writing program of this sort next summer, and one of our graduate students will continue to teach a section of the California junior college terminal English course for first-year college students. In addition, we expect several of the Stanford students who participated in the summer project to continue to work part time in a semi-teaching capacity at the College of San Mateo next year.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

At the Tufts Seminar the Voice Project was thought of as an extensive program in which the first year would be flexible and generally exploratory, while further phases were to be devoted to carrying out specific kinds of research based on the content and methods of the first year. Even though this first year was devoted to exploration rather than to precise evaluation, it is still clear that we were more successful in achieving some objectives than others.

In general, "voice" did in fact serve as a "focus of multiform innovation." Throughout this year we stimulated interest in writing on the Stanford campus and in the local schools and involved many different kinds of teachers and students in our efforts. The teaching of writing demands just this kind of total collaboration -- between writers, teachers, college students and school students, teachers in other colleges and universities and professional schools and members of the community interested in writing. As a result of this first year's work, some teachers at the College of San Mateo, Foothill College, and the City College of the City University of New York may further develop Voice Project ideas. And in the coming year at Stanford, three sections of Freshman English will be taught by teachers who participated in the Voice Project, will be based in part on continuing work in the local schools and will employ Voice Project exercises and materials. Two Voice Project Freshman seminars will also be given. But here again it is best to discuss degrees of success in this program in terms of our stated objectives.

In teaching experimental classes, we were not able to provide materials and circumstances which involved large numbers of students in the creation of games and compositions based on recorded sounds and visual materials, nor did we explore dramatic techniques as fully as we might have. Only one of our writer teachers was also a dramatic director, and his presence was simply not enough to generate extensive experimenting with forms of behavior which are, in effect, analogous to verbal expression. This general inability to develop forms of expression analogous to writing was a special problem at elementary and preschool levels, where we probably did not contribute as much to the lives of younger students as we learned from them. Further, we had intended giving these younger students anthologies of their spoken compositions, but the pressures of the year precluded this possibility. These ideas deserve more work in the future.

Then, too, our efforts to help our Stanford students to function at least in part as teachers in the schools were sometimes less effective than they might have been due to the necessary flexibility and spontaneity of the first year. That is, some of the less structured teaching moments were difficult for the students and a more precise ordering of future materials along the lines suggested at the beginning of the year by Miles Putnam, for instance, is probably desirable. No doubt it is significant that the seven undergraduates who taught in the Summer Readiness Program at the College of San Mateo and who were able to devote full time to this teaching were generally more involved and more successful as teachers than they had been earlier in the year.

Throughout the year we attempted to introduce popular materials into our classes and, as indicated in the summaries of experimental classes, tried to help our students to read with greater precision and dramatic involvement. At best we were partially successful in these efforts. We feel that future programs should concentrate especially on exploring popular culture as a subject worthy of intensive and imaginative study.

It goes without saying that the most important aspect of this project was the use of the concept of voice and the use of recording devices to help students at different educational levels and of different social backgrounds to write more effectively. Involved in this specific effort were various aims which deserve comment:

To compare qualities of personality revealed in a person's speech with corresponding qualities evident in his writing. Our work in early Stanford classes and in the San Mateo project at the end of the year supported the idea that these correspondences exist and can be most important in helping the student to recognize himself in his writing. Toward the end of the year, while working individually with Stanford students, it appeared that a student could profitably revise his work not only by listening to repeated readings of passages of his own prose revealing desirable rhythms, but also by imitating the actual intonations evident in the recordings of his voice.

To enable students to read aloud repeatedly and listen back to their writing in order to discover such things as changes in voice, evasiveness, etc. Many of our group discussions, especially small group discussions, involved this kind of activity which, in general, was most successful. Repeated listenings and the reactions of other students enabled a young writer to hear and perceive intellectually those moments when his lack of understanding or emotional confusion (excessive emotional involvement) caused him to shift disquietingly into different voices or into various kinds of voiceless or machine prose.

To enable the student to "talk out" certain materials he has written about in order to discover new materials and new attitudes. Despite the considerable time we devoted to work with individual students, we were not able to spend as much time as we should have in this kind of time-consuming activity. When we were able to work alone with the student, who would read aloud an inadequate passage and recall or discuss on tape experiences or ideas dealt with in the passage, we invariably found that the student gained new awareness of vital materials and attitudes that he had overlooked or suppressed in his writing. In these cases the truth or accuracy or concreteness of what was achieved in speech (and had been heard on tape) in a sense compensated for the deficiencies of the student's writing and served as a basis for revision. This sort of session was not intended to be therapeutic or psychological. New materials and actual tones of voice exposed in these sessions inevitably prompted discussion of language itself. We should make much greater efforts to work along these lines.

To encourage students to record the speech of other people which they may then study. This kind of literal involvement with the language of others was limited to perhaps half of our students, but for these students the actual collecting of speech was a most important learning experience. The discovery of living tellers of folktales and discovery of how language functions in this particular form; the collecting and study of individual stories and group dialogues of children which revealed subtleties, complexities and beauties of language comparable to those in certain books or stories -- all this was for our students actual, challenging, engaging. One student went so far as to document the life and personality of a friend by collecting tapes of her speech in a variety of situations which she then compared to her formal written compositions, examination papers and personal letters. We should find ways of allowing many more students to become this actively concerned with the language that exists around them.

To study the similarities and differences between the qualities of the speaker's voice audible in a tape recording and the qualities apparent in a transcript of the recording. In reading, writing about, and discussing tapes and transcripts of speakers outside the Stanford community, many of the participating Stanford freshmen learned to recognize certain formulas of speech and borrowed phrasing and worked with the loss which almost always took place between tape and transcript. On the other hand, these students also learned to recognize original rhythmical moments in transcripts which, in fact, began to suggest the speaker's audible voice. As suggested by many of the previous summaries of experimental sessions, much of our work was based on this activity and was at times extremely successful. We sometimes worked with individual students or with small groups of students on the problem of revision. If a student "talked out" his ideas and materials he profited not only by uncovering new materials or new ideas but also by coming to perceive what were often extreme differences between the actual intonations of his voice and the transcribed language. He perceived the inadequacy of the language itself; he could attempt with some measure of success to find ways to incorporate into his writing certain qualities analogous to his spoken intonations. However, we were not able to do nearly enough of this kind of work. Future experimentation should concentrate on this activity.

To involve the student in group discussions and group story-telling sessions so that he may listen to his speech and study it in relationship to the speech of the other participants in the group. In several school classes this use of the tape recorder was clearly effective in helping students to learn about form and about the functions of language as well as to learn about themselves and their own uses of language. In addition, several Stanford classes found it profitable simply to replay, after a reasonable time lag, portions of particularly valuable class discussions, which the students could then respond to with critical detachment. Especially in light of the study of small group behavior, this kind of effort deserves further exploration.

To enable the student to hear varying interpretations of his own writing. Obviously, we consider it important that the student hear his writing read aloud by those other than himself -- other teachers, other students, writers and actors from the university or local community.

For the writers and teachers participating in this project the year's work at Stanford substantiates the value of some of our initial broad assumptions: that students should be encouraged to teach or tutor as part of their college experience; that writing should in fact be taught in college and should involve writers, teachers of widely differing experience, or simply anyone interested in teaching writing; and finally, that to teach writing by working with the relationship between speech and writing has significant possibilities of developing the verbal abilities of students at all educational levels. But for us the year's work was an exhaustive start which now suggests more clearly the considerable amount of work to be done in the future.

Despite this present year of Voice Project work, and all that we know about rhetoric as well as new developments in linguistics, it seems safe to say that there will never be any one way to teach writing and, further, that we really do not know very much about this process. Further work should probably be viewed first in terms of consortia of people and institutions or special centers or organizations within institutions. For instance, Herbert Kohl's Teachers and Writers Collaborative (which might well extend methods and ideas developed this year at Stanford) will hopefully affect education in many ways in New York. We will need more such collaborations in the future. But clearly we also need such collaborative centers within a large variety of colleges and universities.

In subsequent programs similar to this one, evaluative studies should be conducted within the classes; ideas and exercises should be further refined with particular emphasis on the use of materials at different age levels and with students of different language backgrounds. Future projects should include on their staffs not only writer-teachers but also psychologists whose interest in language, group behavior, and learning processes should help to define concepts of voice more specifically. Throughout this year we have in fact used such concepts actively and effectively, and yet we have not documented psychologically the existence of what we call the "writing voice." Both for the sake of teaching reading as well as writing, we should probably devise a series of psychological exercises based, for instance, on different examples of a writer's prose, in order to substantiate still more concretely the concept of voice. But specific research should be conducted, at least in part, by writers and psychologists together, on such subjects as gesture in speech, personality in speech, and prose rhythm. We do not want our students to write as they speak, but there are fundamental relationships between speech and writing which can be used to teach writing. All this is to say that a great deal of energy must yet be spent if we are to be able to teach what Robert Frost called "the sound of sense."

Stanford University
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I. BACKGROUND: TUFTS SEMINAR

REPORT OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE ON ENGLISH, LITERATURE, AND ARTS

Prepared by Walter J. Ong, S. J.

Participants

William Alfred, reporter	Eugene Lichtenstein
Benjamin DeMott	Jacquelyn Mattfeld
Joseph Farrell	Charles Muscatine
Jack Gelber	Benjamin Nichols
Sister Jacqueline Grennan	Walter Ong, S. J., chairman
Albert Guerard	Esther Raushenbush
John Hawkes	Seymour Simches

INTRODUCTION

In its often heated exchanges, the Working Committee on English, Literature, and Arts covered most of the common complaints about the teaching of these subjects and some uncommon ones. Since the entire Seminar appears to be directed ultimately toward some sort of action, the present report will attempt to focus chiefly on what might be done to improve undergraduate teaching of English, literature, and the arts in view of the present educational crisis. This focus of course entails some treatment of what is wrong with the present situation. Moreover, since undergraduate teaching and learning is intimately tied in with elementary, secondary, and graduate instruction, these too will come in for some attention. This Working Committee dealt mostly with instruction in English, for the obvious reason that English commands more teacher and student effort and time than the other subjects represented in this Committee. There seemed to be, however, pretty total agreement that foreign languages and literatures and the other arts -- painting and other graphic arts, sculpture, music, dance, and so on -- need to be related in various ways to the study of English.

FUNCTIONS OF ENGLISH TEACHING

Under the impression that some Seminar members representing the sciences felt that the purpose of teaching English was ultimately to engage the student himself in the production of writing, the Working Committee went on record as convinced that English teaching actually served several functions, namely the production of: (1) readers who respond fully to what they read in a way bearing on their real life world, (2) literary critics, (3) professional teachers trained through a graduate program, (4) skilled writers, nonprofessional and (in much smaller numbers) professional.

Response (Function 1)

A great deal of discussion centered around the first of these functions. It was felt that, although science teaching as expounded by members of this Seminar is more like literature teaching than most have thought (that is, it is not something remote from human interests, desiccating, brutally abstract, and so on, but actually a human creation of the human mind interacting with the world where man finds himself), nevertheless what should be taught in literary study, the "stuff" of literature, is radically different from what is taught in science because literature involves the human life world itself directly and reflectively.

This and other important issues regarding response to literature were crystallized with great passion and through the efforts of Benjamin DeMott and his opponents and defenders (the two were not always distinguishable). Here, fortunately, a major crisis of this Committee developed and eventually resolved itself when DeMott presented the Seminar with a written statement, "Last Try," a copy of which is appended (Appendix A).[1] The DeMott position was essentially that the English class is "a first rate training ground for all kinds of acts of discrimination" engaging students' real lives and involving values real to them, and that, whatever his public protestations, the professional English teacher generally speaking "does not honor that concern and purpose in his day-to-day teaching." Instead, he concentrates on matters such as "introducing students to arcane literary hierarchies (the mystique of 'good books,' etc.)," or "the structure and design of the poem or book, ... its effects ... modes of persuasion, ... images ... ," or "the history of literature, the history of language, and lives of the great writers," etc. Members of the Working Committee agreed with the aims of DeMott's "Last Try." They disagreed (how much remained unclear) as to (a) how totally desperate the present situation was (all owned it was desperate to a degree) and (b) as to when, if ever, such matters as literary history, literay forms, linguistics, or rhetorical techniques were to be studied. All agreed that unless these were studied out of and in connection with the use of real discrimination of the sort DeMott described, they were better not studied.

In addition to the critique of the present situation, the DeMott "Last Try" included concrete proposals, developed out of recent work by DeMott with a group of English teachers in Birmingham, England. These involved starting with movie scenes (rather than with books) to give the students opportunity to assess directly what "lies" and what "tells the truth;" from here one could move to Playboy, Sports Illustrated, some short stories, Mad magazine, a play of Shakespeare, and so on. For purposes of identification it was noted that the work at Birmingham was more or less connected with the writings and teaching of Raymond Williams (Jesus College, Cambridge, England) and ultimately with the work of F. R. Leavis, Denys Thompson, and others at Cambridge University in the 1930's.

Considerable attention has been given to the DeMott statement here because it did crystallize the feelings of many on the Committee (despite the stir of opposition) and because it has far-reaching implications for the teaching of English from elementary school through the graduate school, as well as for training in writing as such.

Discussion of teaching which elicits full response from readers and demands true resonance in writers led to another matter taken to be of crucial importance: the matter of "voice." This will be treated fully in a separate report by John Hawkes (Appendix B),[2] supplemented by a report from Jack Gelber (Appendix C).[3] Hawkes first raised the issue of "voice" by citing a study by Walter Ong, "Voice as Summons for Belief," from the latter's book The Barbarian Within (Macmillan, 1962). Ramifications of this theme were seemingly endless -- it connected particularly with concerns of Albert Guerard and William Alfred in the teaching of writing. In brief, it might be said that the establishment of a sense of "voice" on the part of a reader or writer refers to his entering into a real (as against an insensitively masked or "phony") relationship with himself and his audience and his material. It was widely agreed that one of the problems of students (and others) in writing was finding their real selves, and that finding oneself was the obverse of finding others to whom one was really talking. This problem exists not only for creative writing but also, at the other pole, for objectively expository or descriptive prose. The relationship of the speaking voice to the "authorial" voice of the writer was discussed at some length: the two are most often quite different and yet intimately related. Questions of "authenticity" (a frequent and even commonplace concern of modern man) are involved here. Hawkes, Gelber, Guerard, Alfred, Father Ong, Mrs. Esther Raushenbush, Charles Muscatine, and others were interested in applications of this approach to initiatory courses in writing (Freshman English, creative writing, etc.). Hawkes reported on experiments in the use of drama for the discovery of "voice" and on further plans of his to work with dramatic production, bodily action, dance, and the kinesthetic sense to enable students to discover their various "voices." Miss Carolyn Fitchett of Educational Services, Incorporated, visiting the Seminar and Working Committee by request, reported on work of this sort for underprivileged children.

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[1] See pp. 10-12 below.

Criticism, Graduate Studies, Writing (Functions 2, 3, 4)

The Committee gave little attention to the state of literary criticism. Discussion of the present state of affairs in graduate training and the teaching of writing centered on the seemingly widespread failure to establish continuing contact with the realities of human existence, so that discussion of these subjects was inextricably entwined with what has been said above about response and "voice." Other reflections on these functions will appear below here in the treatment of areas of possible actions.

AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN AND POSSIBLE ACTION

Some ten areas of special concern and possible action were isolated by Committee members. Not all were subsequently given equal attention. They were as follows:

1. Initiation to Writing and Literature (Freshman English)

Freshman English has been the subject of constant attack, analysis, revaluation, and restructuring, most of it singularly uneventful. The term "Freshman

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[2] See pp. 18-22 below.

[3] For this and reports by Charles Muscatine, Jacquelyn A. Mattfeld, Seymour Simches and Albert J. Guerard, see "The Tufts Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Instruction, August 30-September 11, 1965," p. 22.

English" itself is often disliked, and the surrogate for it in the subhead here above is not satisfactory either. Proposals for reform of this course or courses are legion across the nation. One which appeared particularly relevant to ideas in this Seminar was the use of teachers drawn from fields other than English (economics, history, sociology, etc.) and even of teachers without ordinary degree qualifications but otherwise highly promising drawn from the edges of the academic world (faculty wives, etc.) or from sectors of the civic community. There was great concern about involving other departments in the teaching of writing (especially since the unconcern of many faculty members causes students' writing to deteriorate after it has been brought to some kind of competence by the end of the freshman year), but there was also a general feeling that no practical way could be found to involve other departments.

A concrete proposal for handling courses in writing is contained in a separate report here by Muscatine of the University of California at Berkeley, where the proposal is about to be made (Appendix D).

2. Undergraduate Literature Teaching

Innovations in undergraduate literature teaching were urged by members of this Working Committee chiefly in connection with the DeMott presentation discussed above or in connection with "Regional" Humanities Centers or Laboratories such as the Institute for Literary Studies described below. It appears certain that there are no mere gimmicks to improve this teaching which are not already worn. Large-scale improvements demand thoughtful and extensive experimentation.

3. Graduate (Teacher) Training

There was a strong feeling among Committee members that one key to fruitful innovation at the undergraduate and all other levels of English teaching lay in graduate work and that graduate work should, by and large, include some apticeship in teaching.

The most novel and, to many, promising proposals here were that both members of graduate faculties and graduate students, perhaps at experimental centers or "laboratories," should be involved in doing teaching at levels below college as part of their education. As Muscatine put it, they -- or some of them, at least -- should become acquainted with high school teaching in order to know what they will be getting from the high schools, and with elementary school teaching in order to rediscover their subject matter itself in a fresh light by trying to convey some of it to young children.

This proposal parallels some of the current activity in physics and mathematics. The proposal was, however, generated in this Working Committee not out of a desire to imitate the ongoing activity in these or other fields but rather out of the feeling that the DeMott proposal and the Hawkes ("voice") proposal discussed above might best be introduced into education at the very earliest possible points.

Many thought that interest and experimental participation in even elementary school teaching on the part of select scholars and leading members of graduate school faculties as well as on the part of graduate students would help make the graduate schools more alive, would better undergraduate instruction, build morale for secondary and elementary school teachers, and keep the more deadly methods courses from dominating the teaching of literature at the lower levels.

4. Elementary and Secondary School Teaching

This has been covered in the remarks on Graduate (Teacher) Training above.

5. Relationship of Literature and Other Arts

Most of the suggestions in this area were concerned with ways of bringing English alive by the use of graphic and dramatic arts to establish contact with areas of reality in the students' experience.

For the teaching of foreign languages, the use of arts other than literature was particularly recommended, but significant innovations were not proposed.

The arts other than literature were represented at this Seminar only by Mrs. Jacquelyn A. Mattfeld, who as a musicologist also participated with the historians in the Working Committee on the Teaching of American History. A statement by Mrs. Mattfeld is included here as Appendix E.

It was felt that while the other arts were invaluable in the teaching of literature, they should not be made in themselves subservient to or dependent upon literature but need lives of their own on college and university campuses.

6. Visiting Teams

Many Committee members were interested in the possibility of making available a pool of scholars who, individually or in teams (perhaps including graduate students), could visit interested colleges, especially smaller ones, with a view to giving the English courses an injection of greater life. It was suggested that one-shot visits would be rather useless, unless they were quite prolonged, and that a better procedure might be visits of a week or so made in conjunction with local plans for curriculum revision and repeated as the revision was pursued. This would give continuity to whatever the visiting scholars could accomplish.

7. Mobile Writing Teams

A pool of writers for visiting interested institutions could likewise give life to writing courses, it was thought. Successful visits would probably have to be a couple of weeks' duration, at least. The report by Jack Gelber (Appendix C) touches on plans for mobile writers.

8. "Voice" as Focus of Multiform Innovation

This matter has been treated above under the subhead Functions of English Teaching.

9. Manifesto or Combined Interim Report and Manifesto

The subject of a statement from the present group or members of the present group regarding the weaknesses of present English teaching in the light of the present educational crisis met with mixed response. Many felt this would be just one more statement. Others thought that it need not be: coming from an uncommitted group of some national prominence, it might stir up something. This matter was not pursued far.

10. Foreign Languages and Literatures

Foreign languages and literatures, like the arts other than literature, were represented on this Working Committee by one person only, Seymour Simches. His report appears here as Appendix F. Both he and the other members of the Committee felt that foreign languages and literature merited more attention than this Committee had been able to give them.

CONCRETE PROPOSALS

The two most specific and promising concrete proposals generated in this Working Committee were (1) the "Voice" Proposal discussed above under the subhead Functions of English Teaching and (2) a proposal for an Institute for Literary Studies (a kind of "Regional" Laboratory), which will be noted briefly here and explained more fully in Appendix G.

Institute for Literary Studies

It appeared to many of this Working Committee that improvement of teaching of English at the undergraduate level would demand improvement at the graduate level. Not only do aims and procedures in graduate instruction largely determine the style of undergraduate teaching but, also, more than is the case in most other disciplines, graduate students in English are themselves often actually engaged in teaching undergraduates. It was felt that what was needed most, from elementary through graduate instruction was a live sense of literature as literature, that is, a sense of literature as intimately related to man's real life world and to his values and powers of discrimination -- the sort of sense treated above in the DeMott proposal and the Hawkes "voice" proposal. Moreover, it was felt that a feasible way -- perhaps the only feasible way -- to bring about improvement would be to establish some sort of center where a concrete program could be put into effect, with a view to propagating elsewhere what the program found worthwhile.

A proposal for just such a center, possibly at Stanford University, was worked out by Albert Guerard, William Alfred, Charles Muscatine, Father Walter Ong, Esther Raushenbush, Benjamin Nichols, John Hawkes, and others on this Working Committee. It is described in Appendix G. In general, the idea is to set up a special Institute for Literary Studies with a special degree program for exceptionally promising students, allowing great fluidity in selection of courses, close contact with faculty, normally some creative writing (thought of in part as related to the teaching work of the candidate), and some actual teaching experience not only at the undergraduate level but, also, experimentally, even down to the elementary school level. The Institute would involve its faculty, too, in the re-exploration of literature teaching at all levels, from elementary through graduate, somewhat after the fashion found useful for sciences at ESI.

This Institute would serve as a seed-bed, bringing in scholars and creative writers from elsewhere for longer or shorter periods and allowing its students to work for certain periods at other universities as well. Through the inter-university steering committee for the Institute, and later its directors or advisory committee, contacts with other institutions would be fostered which would, it is hoped, lead to parallel or related experiments elsewhere. Institutions mentioned as promising for such parallel or related centers are Sarah Lawrence College (which appears ready to move very soon), California (Berkeley), St. Louis University, and perhaps some university or universities in the South.

It was felt that the presence of such an Institute on the academic scene would do much to stir up or to strengthen local innovations in institutions around the country generally.

LAST TRY

by Benjamin DeMott

What exactly was the "trouble in the English Literature group" all about? the Answer lies in the nature of the complaint I felt obliged to make against my profession. The complaint was that teachers of English Literature have a painfully narrow conception of their subject. They do not see the English class as a first rate training ground for all kinds of acts of discrimination. They are not continually and primarily and unrelentingly engaged in the activity of encouraging students to find the bearing of this book and that poem on their own lives. And they are unwilling to subordinate the cause of pure literature to the labor of drawing men into an effort to reflect upon and seek to understand their own experience (a labor that art makes much easier).

On the face of it what I have just said about the "right" way to teach English is a truism. Every teacher has heard these words about literature and self-knowledge and has said them himself, announcing the supreme relevance of literature to the development of character, imagination, responsiveness to life, etc. Given that fact nothing could be more predictable than that a group, any group, of English Literature professors, would find it ridiculous for one of their number to charge the profession with obliviousness to the true end of literary studies. Everybody knows that books "connect." Everybody also knows that anyone who claims he alone knows about the connections must be mad.

But my complaint, remember, wasn't that the professional English teacher doesn't know hiw ultimate concern and purpose. It was that, whatever his public protestations, he does not honor that concern and purpose in his day-to-day teaching. Instead, he concentrates on matters like these:

1. Introducing students to arcane literary hierarchies -- the mystique of "good books," etc. (Take a book, any book, this book.) The high school teacher and the college teacher do this in exactly the same ways. They assign on opening day a reading list -- Silas Lapham or Harvey Swados or Joyce or whatever. Everyone takes in, by implication, that this is it: the first fact about literature is that there is good stuff and bad stuff and teacher knows the good stuff. (The bad stuff is what other people read.) And teacher will tell you even if you don't ask. The key thing he will tell you is that the bad stuff is beneath mention, does not organize life, does not lay an order over against experience, cannot be usefully attended to with an eye toward discovering its relevance to human life.

2. The structure and design of the poem or book. The way its effects are made. The nature of the speaking voice within the book. The

particular modes of persuasion. The relations of its images, the linguistic continuities, the kinds of interplay between dramatic units (scene and act, for instance), etc.

3. The history of literature, the history of language, the lives of the great writers, their philosophical ideas, the development of literary form (Shakespeare liberated the sonnet from Petrarch, John Donne liberated the sonnet from Shakespeare, then came the heroic couplet and soon the Romantic poets protested against the heroic couple on behalf of the sloppier quatrain and then we have Ezra Pound).

The subjects just mentioned are the only subjects in most English teachers' classrooms. English Literature professors are professionally and rigidly committed to the business of opposing student involvement with the text, "identification" with the hero, etc. The student may "identify," God forgive him, on his own time, but please keep the muck of his life out of my classroom. Yet at the same time the teacher is telling himself that of course he's concerned with the relation, between literature and life. But there is a "field" to be covered, isn't there? We do have to show them what good books really are, don't we?

Let me repeat: I believe virtually everything in literature teaching today is an evasion. Virtually everything that takes place in the name of introducing students to the best that has been known and thought is an evasion. And I further believe that only a demand for a complete shift of attitude, a thoroughgoing redefinition of purpose, in the arts-teaching profession can be counted on to bring people up short about this evasiveness. This opinion isn't, I think, shared by my colleagues either in the profession at large or at the present seminar.

-- But calling for a change of attitude is merely prelegomenizing. After the first paragraph, says Joe Turner, what next? After you say, "I'm for a new kind of literature teaching that makes contact with students," what then?

The full answer can't be given here but part of it can. Let me mention one example out of a possible thousand. Instead of starting an introduction to literature courses with a list or with one book, or with teacher as authority, let us begin with some scenes from movies. Coming down to cases, start with rock and roll footage from the Polish film, A Generation, from an American bikini and surfboard movie, and from an English provincial movie. The dance footage is shown at the start and the student is asked for his reactions. (Some of this footage in the American film consists of tight shots, held for several seconds, on a girl's ecstatically frenzied face -- titillating stuff. Some of it sees the dance as a dance, not as an orgy; tight shots and fast cutting are avoided and the camera places the activity as less sexually arousing, sexually opportunistic stuff -- comparable in feeling to the peasant dance, festival-like). Students in talking about what they see feel pressed within themselves to make a distinction and to justify it. They feel that one film "lies," the other "tells the truth." They feel this strongly because they can consult what they know for themselves, they can ask their experience a question. The teacher has no technical language to interpose between them and their need to ask, or if he has one, he forgets it. He encourages them to go on reaching for the terms that express their satisfaction and dissatisfaction, that in effect constitute answers to the question, is this true? Why? Why not? Later we move to Playboy, Sports Illustrated, a couple of short stories, Mad magazine, other movies, a play of Shakespeare, and this week's Bonanza. We never leave the mixture until or unless there is some sense of growing hostility to pop; if no hostility grows, then you don't move. And when you do move to high culture, you move always with the same questions, the same interests. Where and how does this scene connect with my experience? What feelings are at stake? Which feelings, which behavior do I want to approve? Disapprove? Does the judgment in the work itself seem right? What does it leave out? What does it assume? Where is the writer right about human beings and human relations and human issues?

At some level, some day, not at the beginning, middle or end of "the course," problems of how the Art part of art is made, how the effects are produced, can be entertained. Teachers who can't wait to peddle the junk-technology of their trade will of course be at it on the first day. Good teachers will keep the "course" alive longer. They will remember that it is just as possible to work the mind while seeking understanding of human situations and feelings as it is to work the mind by perceiving structure and describing tones of voice in a poem.

To do this kind of teaching you need patience and money and luck and intuition. It took many people many days (in England) to find the right footage for the rock and roll bit. (I know this one works.) I could use a hundred more exhibits than I have. No, a thousand more. Choosing them is a difficult work. You must look for comparisons in which the probable way the student will jump is one you can imagine yourself following with at least a little profit. (A lot of stuff has to be thrown away.) Also you need a willingness to believe that any good training ground for the act of discrimination, the act of choosing between versions of life, the act of deciding what the truth of human situations is, has to be accepted gratefully no matter how lowbrow or highbrow. You have, in sum, to root all the deadening snobbery of your whole literary past straight up out of your soul.

One last word: it would be a favor to me if, when the present seminar is over, people (in any field whatever, of course) who come across promising comparisons, parallels, etc. -- in the popular arts or elsewhere -- would drop me a note about them. I'd also be grateful for any random thoughts on the subject that, for reasons I can't go fully into here, engage me most. They are (one last repetition):

1. The creation of living contact between student and art at any school level.

2. The development of ways of encouraging disciplined interpretation of art as an instrument for clarifying individual experience.

INSTITUTES FOR LITERARY STUDIES

BY Albert J. Guerard

The present proposal was generated with the following background. Seminar members early became aware that responsible persons in United States Government offices dealing in various ways with education have two very serious concerns regarding the humanities and social sciences especially related to the work of this Seminar: (1) the need to get first-rate scholars in the subject-matter fields interested in innovations which will improve instruction in their fields not merely at the level of higher education but all the way through the educational structure; and (2) the need for experimental programs which are to some degree replicable. Programs must be initiated as specific centers, but such programs need to be set up so as to seed themselves elsewhere or to "infect" other centers or levels of instruction. The present proposal is concerned with such a program.

The Seminar was of course not persuaded that all innovation is necessarily good, but its particular business was to explore what kinds of innovation in undergraduate instruction might be promising, and to this it directed its efforts. Back of the planning for the Seminar was the experience of the Panel on Educational Research and Development with highly productive innovations in Mathematics and Science teaching extending from graduate school down to the elementary school levels.

Both the members of the Committee on English Instruction and the full seminar were agreed that radical innovation is highly desirable in literature and writing teaching of the first and second years, especially in the weaker colleges. The English Committee agreed on a number of general proposals, and on two specific ones. The first of these was the "Voice Project" initiated by John Hawkes, with the help of Father Ong (See the latter's "Voice on Summons for Belief" in his book The Barbarian Within, Macmillan, 1962) to involve experiments in improving writing through an increased awareness of "voice" as a reflection of self. The Project (which can be tried in any university and used at any school and age level) is being worked out further by Mr. Hawkes. The Committee's other major recommendation, which had enthusiastic endorsement by the full seminar, follows.

Institutes for Literary Studies

Since graduate education sets the style for so much in undergraduate teaching (and in secondary-school and elementary-school teaching as well), an essential appears to be improvement of the training of teachers in the graduate schools. The traditional Ph.D. in English, though appropriate enough for the development of historians, some types of scholars, and certain kinds of specialized teachers, gives too little attention to the needs of those who will be primarily undergraduate teachers, and fails to reflect the increasing interdisciplinary nature of the problems the student will face later as a working scholar.

There is a special problem in large universities. Although the graduate student is usually engaged in teaching composition and literature courses for freshmen and sophomores, he is, in his work as instructor, relatively isolated from critical rethinking of the principles that underlie the teaching of English. His teaching work is detached from questions concerning the relationship of his materials to his students' previous experience in school, the relationship of his subject-matter to other possible learners (such as the so-called "Disadvantaged"), or the relationship of his teaching to his research. Faculty members committed to teaching and to the advancement of learning increasingly find themselves called upon to think about the improvement of the public-school curriculum, ways of teaching literature and composition to the disadvantaged learner in the college as well as the schools, and the uses of knowledge and techniques conventionally assigned to other disciplines (e.g., history, theology, psychology) in the solution of their own scholarly problems. At the same time, they are commonly isolated from their graduate students by a program that makes no curricular room for these concerns. The result is that graduate students are engaged in a study program and trained in a teaching program often more and more removed from the pedagogical and scholarly problems that are engaging the best attention of the professionals in the field.

There are two reasons for experimenting with a new degree program: (1) it would constitute a valid new program in its own right; (2) the existence of an attractive alternative to the traditional Ph.D. might help graduate schools in their current widespread rethinking of doctoral problems. The Committee rather favored a new terminology for the degree: Doctor of Literary Studies (D.L.S.) or Doctor of Literature (D.Litt.). But the Committee is also aware that retaining the "Ph.D." terminology in some form for the new degree program would have some advantages. In any event, the new degree is envisioned not as less demanding but rather as more demanding than the usual Ph.D. though also more flexible and, it is hoped, for those who elect it more rewarding.

The Committee realizes that a number of universities may already have experimental programs that arise from the situation described above and that these programs can be productive. It recommends in addition that a concerted and visible effort be made to experiment with a new degree in four or five institutions. This visible effort would take different forms in: (1) the institution not at present offering a doctor's degree in English but planning soon to do so; (2) the university where cross-departmental Institutes and Committees are vehicles for innovation; (3) the university where innovation normally takes place within a department. The committee proposed the experiment be conducted within the frame of Institutes for Literary Studies.

The Institute, an integral part of the host university, would normally become a center for research in the problems of teaching literature at all levels, though with particular attention to undergraduate teaching. It might eventually grow into a Regional Center of the Humanities or "Regional Laboratory." But its most obvious function would be to develop a program leading to a new degree. Implicit in the experiment is the hope that comparable Institutes will come into being in many other universities, and that each Institute will have a beneficial influence on surrounding schools and colleges.

The Institute, then, is conceived as both a center for research and as administrative body offering a new degree. However, the research and teaching functions will be closely related. Everyone attached to the Institute will be involved in a regular rather than sporadic interest in the improvement of undergraduate teaching. There will be opportunities for experimental work in teaching in elementary schools and high schools, as well as at the undergraduate level. The teacher of freshmen and sophomores should know more about the high school and about the personality of the adolescent. The high schools in turn should become more aware of the aims of the college teacher. But such "articulation" has a further significance. Experimental programs in improving the teaching of physics in college are already under way, inspired in part by the efforts to improve the teaching of science in the elementary schools. It is conceivable some new ways of truly engaging the undergraduate in literature may be discovered through work with children and younger students. In addition, there will be opportunities for experimental work in predominantly Negro colleges. Through addressing the problem of the English program at the predominantly Negro college, the participants will not only be applying their expertise to the solution of vital contemporary social and cultural problems but will be reexamining the traditional assumptions about the importance of literature in a program of education and about its chief sources of appeal to men.

The New Program

Each Institute should plan its own particular program. But the new programs, if they are to be effective, must possess characteristics and aims that carry over from one Institute to another. It might be agreed, for instance, that the degree would normally take four years, and that this would always include a certain amount of supervised teaching, usually in more than one kind of course or situation. It would also imply a continuing scrutiny, in seminars, of the problems of teaching. (This is not to be, however, but cut-and-dried "methods" course.)

The following remarks, not intended as prescriptive, will indicate the committee's thinking on this new degree:

1. There should be no preconceived specific requirements for the doctor's degree to be attained at the completion of the program. The program of each student should be individually arranged within the general specifications worked out at the individual Institute and may include work in English, American, and some Continental literature, as well as in art, music, drama, or a related cultural interest. It might include some creative writing, regarded as part of the preparation of the teacher. It should include practice in acts of real discrimination affecting simultaneously reactions to the most "serious" art and to the mass media and popular culture. The overall program would represent an inter-disciplinary grasp of a field (American culture, the period in England from 1660 to 1780, literature and the evolution of communications media, etc.) at the center of which stands literature, rather than a knowledge of English literature as a more or less exclusive specialty. Dilettantism and superficiality would of course have to be guarded against; entrance requirements have to assure that the program is being built upon a sound undergraduate major.

2. There should be no absolutely set form for the dissertation. Requirements might be met by a dissertation similar to that of the usual Ph.D. in English, or by a monograph that combines scholarship with the pedagogical

experiments undertaken by the student and perhaps throws light on the nature of meaning of literature in the light of such experiments.

3. The foreign language requirement should be considered according to individual needs, and to field or period of major interest. It is more important to have a true working knowledge of one foreign language than to have a slight knowledge of three.

4. The oral examination should be based on the individual student's program rather than on some preconceived scheme for coverage. The use of an external examiner may be considered in order to guard against the dangers of parochialism and to dissipate the notion that innovation is akin to superficiality.

5. All members of the Institute, faculty and students (and visitors), might attend a regular "conference" combining reports with conviviality. However, the program should involve no universally specified course requirements and would conceivably demand no grades.

6. Though students in the Institute would work closely with faculty members and visitors attached to the Institute, they would be regular graduate students of the university at which the Institute is located, free to enter appropriate courses in whatever department and to enjoy all other appropriate scholarly and social facilities. In turn, graduate students working outside of the Institute will be free to consult anyone attached to the Institute and to share in its facilities and activities. That is, no social separation between the two kinds of doctoral student is contemplated.

7. Students would have an opportunity to observe and to participate in teaching innovations and Institute experiments (such as the "Voice Project" concerning the relationship of voice, role personality and oral and written style). Other experimental programs may be developed, involving a healthy interpenetration of all student generations -- elementary school, high school, undergraduate, graduate, or of more than one kind of college population (well established superior colleges and "developing" colleges, for example). Students might visit, moreover, an institute for the development of discrimination through work in contemporary culture comparable to that recently operating in Birmingham, England, as reported to the Seminar by Benjamin DeMott.

8. All students would do some supervised college teaching, in Freshman English, in Freshman Seminars, possibly in other courses, as part of the doctorate program. They would be expected to join any course specially designed for those who will be teaching Freshman English the following year. It is hoped a few master high school teachers will join the Freshman English staff on one year appointments. They too would of course be involved in the Institute's activities. Moreover, the "Voice Project" of Mr. Hawkes (which will involve some four other teachers or writers) could be explored through four or five experimental sections of Freshman English. Thus to be involved in the Freshman English course should be -- whether one comes from the English Department or from the Institute -- a rewarding experience.

9. Occasional public seminars or conferences might increase the influence of the Institute on surrounding colleges and schools.

10. The Institute should have a physical home with ample space for both students and faculty.

11. Last but far from least: a certain amount of visiting and exchange among the Institutes would be encouraged. All students would normally spend part of their four-year fellowship abroad.

The suggested plan is to accept ten new students each year, building to a total enrollment of forty, of which not more than thirty would normally be in residence.

The success of the Institute will depend largely on its choice of students. It should, if it offers full four-year fellowships, be able to choose from among the very best not only of those who had for some time intended to continue on to graduate school but also of those, who, in an alarmingly increasing number, do not want to continue on to graduate school because of their sense of the rigidity and remoteness of doctoral programs in English.

The present committee will continue to confer on general aims. It proposes to invite a number of distinguished professors and writers to serve as an advisory board. It is assumed the present committee, the larger committee on literature of the Tufts Seminar, and the advisory board will take an active interest in all the Institutes that come into being.

THE VOICE PROJECT

An Idea for Innovation in the Teaching of Writing

by John Hawkes

Background. The ideas and materials described in this proposal are based on my experience as a novelist and teacher of writing as well as on the exchange that took place between members of the English Group that convened as part of the Seminar to Initiate New Experiments in Undergraduate Instruction.

For the past ten years, briefly at Harvard and then at Brown University, I have taught two kinds of writing courses, the advanced course intended for students interested specifically in fiction, and the intermediate writing course intended for students with only an ill-defined interest in improving their use of written prose. My commitment to this latter course has always been of a special kind, since it is here that the student's confrontation with language has been most pressing and that his personal growth has been most at stake. Though I have never thought of the intermediate writing course as "creative" in any exclusive sense, I have always approached the varied activity of this kind of course with a belief in creative attitudes and in the capacity of all students to be imaginative. The task has been to encourage the non-fiction writing student to discover himself as the center of a writing process which results in a personal or identifiable prose, rather than in "machine" or "voiceless" prose.

In my experience a typical class in intermediate writing is one limited to seventeen students who elect to take the course and who are admitted to it by a screening process. These students tend to be sophomores, though there is usually enough representation of the other three college years to provide an additional and essential diversity within the class activity. The screening process, which involves in-class writing during the first meeting, samples of previous work as well as interviews, is sometimes necessary to handle over-enrollment but also provides an initial groundwork of problems and subject matter and, further, allows the teacher specificity in assembling a class of students displaying a wide range of maturity and intellectual and verbal ability.

The operation of the class is simple. The students are required to write fifty pages during a semester; they are expected to participate in class discussions two hours a week and to make as much use of individual conferences with the instructor as possible; they are encouraged but not required to do related reading wherever possible; they are required to undertake short weekly writing exercises for the first half of the semester, after which they are given complete freedom to pursue the kinds of writing they are most interested in. At the outset the writing exercises are crucial and are concerned with problems of conception, method and form, so that the area of subject matter is left entirely to the individual student. Typical exercises are: to create the impression of imminent motion in a still object; to handle an event or idea in terms of past and present time; to handle an idea in terms of action and an action in terms of reflection; to handle any kind of material in the third person and then in the first persion; to make the reader accept something extraordinary as commonplace and something commonplace as extraordinary. Aside from such exercises, the student is generally encouraged to write personal narrative during the first semester, though most students enrolling in the course come to personal narrative with surprise and an understandable resistance. But the point is that personal narrative forces the student to deal with memory, time and himself as the center of the writing process, and allows him to handle both concrete and abstract experience in a single piece of writing. In this way coherence becomes tangible and ideas emerge as dramatic entities. Underlying the course effort as a whole is the concept of voice -- the one fictional concept which to me is most relevant to human growth and to communication in general. It is the concept that I have found most helpful as a teacher of so-called non-literary students, which is to say that it has been a means for helping students to change their writing while discovering that writing is a meaningful, rather than remote and mechanical, kind of behavior. To me, voice stands as one alternative to the sometimes crippling, external logic of formal rhetoric or the various other rationalistic approaches to writing which can never allow teacher and student to work together in one of our most difficult areas on the basis of a truly common understanding.

There are three ways of looking at the concept of voice. It is first of all the instrument of speech; in writing it may be taken to mean the summation of style; but also in writing it may be taken to mean the whole presence of the writer-as-writer rather than the writer-as-man. Writing is often more true to the self than is speaking, but at least writing should be as true to the self as is speaking.

Two quotations from the essay "Voice As Summons For Belief"* by Walter J. Ong, S. J., clarify and enlarge the implications of this subject:

"Speaking and hearing are not simple operations. Each exhibits a dialectical structure which mirrors the mysterious depths of man's psyche. As he composes his thoughts in words, a speaker or writer hears these words echoing within himself and thereby follows his own thought, as though he were another person. Conversely, a hearer or reader repeats within himself the words he hears and thereby understands them, as though he were himself two individuals. This double and interlocking dialect ... provides the matrix for human communication. The speaker listens while the hearer speaks.

"Every human word implies not only the existence -- at least in the imagination -- of another to whom the word is uttered, but it also implies that the speaker has a kind of otherness within himself. He participates in the other to whom he speaks, and it is this underlying participation which makes communication possible. The human speaker can speak to the other precisely because he himself is not purely self, but is somehow also other. His own 'I' is haunted by the shadow of a 'thou' which it can never exorcise."

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*From the book by Walter J. Ong, The Barbarian Within (Macmillan, 1962).

This thinking indicates that if we begin with "voice" as a concept particularly relevant to writing, we are taken ultimately -- but in a special way -- to the areas of psychology, literature, philosophy and religious studies. The mere effort to write is filled with human resonance.

It is unlikely that the voice that emerges from writing will ever correspond exactly with the voice that emerges in speech. But even if these voices were equatable, it is extremely difficult to help the student to arrive at an actual comprehension of the writing voice as single, palpable, real. It is far easier to respond to the speaking voice, and yet within the limitations of an ordinary classroom even the speaking voice, as something with which to work concretely, is hardly available. In other words, until recently it had not occurred to me to attempt to work directly and diversely with the relationship between the "visceral" speaking voice of a person and his writing voice as it emerges from the page. But it now seems to me essential to explore fully this many-sided relationship.

In 1964 I spent several months working in close association with the Actor's Workshop in San Francisco, and it was this for me entirely new and intense involvement in theater life that convinced me that it was essential to approach the teaching of writing in terms of visible behavior as well as in terms of already written words. During rehearsals I was constantly moved by a single observation. That is, the progressive and externally evident effort of the actor working in the rehearsal area corresponded to a creative process which previously I had thought existed only as a psychological process within the individual man or artist. In other words, I was able to see something very like the writing process being acted out unintentionally by people who, as actors in a community situation, were nonetheless closely related to the "silent" writer. I became increasingly aware that acting, which reveals the almost immediately perceivable relationship between gesture and word, could be a very real means for bridging the various distances that exist in writing courses and for making concrete the problems and realities of voice.

One further personal experience crystallized the possibilities. I was able to visit an acting class taught by Gerald Hiken at Stanford University. Several problems were taken up during the hour, but one in particular was relevant to reading, behavior, discovery of the self and expansion of personal capabilities and understanding -- and hence relevant also to writing.

A young student stood before the group, folded his hands, raised his eyes toward the ceiling lights and recited a Shakespeare lyric. The lyric was about summer as the season of love, and several times during his recitation the student was obliged to imitate the sounds of the cuckoo. The first reaction for the student spectators -- to the effect that the recitation had been ironic -- initiated a discussion of the lyric itself. Next the teacher asked another member of the class to sit in a chair on the stage with the first student and established this second student as someone who had heard bad news and needed not practical help but consolation. As soon as he heard this situation described, the second student wisely put his head in his hands. The reciter's task was to "give" the sufferer the lyric. The change in the spoken lyric was considerable. Next the teacher asked the first student to think of something personal and pleasurable -- in this case a field recalled from childhood -- and to recite the lyric. Lastly, the teacher asked the first student to look directly at his audience, which he had not done until this moment, and to give the audience the lyric. Now the lyric emerged not as inappropriately ironic but as warm, light and subtlely and meaningfully humorous. In it was evident a definite life so that the sounds of the cuckoo, for instance, became a simple clear song instead of the vehicle for a young person's discomfort. In the discussion that followed, the teacher suggested that the physical limits of one student's voice in part accounted for the ironic stance he assumed no matter what role or piece of literature he confronted.

This kind of total and active involvement in literature seems to me essential, and suggests that we might well think of exploring the theater to make the learning experience a dramatic reality. At least theater techniques are particularly appropriate to all kinds of writing courses.

Some Experimental Activities in the Pilot Course. Efforts aimed at introducing activities analogous to writing at the intermediate writing course level, and aimed importantly at innovation in initiatory courses, which in turn would involve graduate and elementary school work, should be carried out initially in several institutions. These efforts should lead to specific research -- concerning, for instance, the problems of rhythm in speech and written prose, or the relationship between bodily expression and oral expression -- but experimental teaching should precede research. Wherever possible, pilot courses should be conducted at least in part by men who are themselves novelists, poets, playwrights, but who are also interested in writing as something to teach. Activities to be tried might include:

Item: The teacher may encourage group discussion based on an important theme, such as free speech and the problem of censorship and on related readings selected by the students. Class discussions would be tape-recorded from the outset, and, after a reasonable period, played back to the group, emphasizing in each instance an oral report delivered by one of the students. The various inadequacies of the original oral presentation would be immediately apparent. But more important, the individual student would hear himself as a stranger and would no doubt be aware of some kind of discrepancy -- loss -- between his presentation as he remembers it and that same presentation mechanically reproduced, since when played back the student's audible voice would have become in effect disembodied. At this point the teacher would introduce mimeographed copies of the unedited transcript of the recording, so that the student would be confronted directly with his words now fixed in a variety of voiceless fragments on paper. By now the loss involved in this process would be immense. The student's task would be to rewrite the transcript, attempting to restore what he thinks of as his speaking voice, and which in fact would emerge as his writing voice. This written version of the original presentation would be mimeographed and, in class, compared once more with the original tape-recording. In most cases the achievements of the final piece of writing should be considerable. This fall Professor Benjamin Nichols of the Engineering Department at Cornell plans to teach a freshman English class of eleven Engineering students, and expects to experiment along these lines.

Item: The student may become interested in such subjects as story-telling and fantasy-making impulses (in children, fraternity members, etc.), qualities of regional or group-culture speech and their relationship to emotional stance and social problems, speaking as a defensive or liberating activity, the difference between actual life dialogue and dialogue written for the stage. Having created a project, a student might collect his own samples of speech on tape. He would then introduce some portion of this material into the course situation, which would mean that he would provide his own written version of the context from which the taped material had been taken, and might offer comparative selections from comic strips, novels, popular magazines, etc. In this kind of activity, students will not doubt exchange materials and attempt to handle them in different ways, as in pantomine, improvization, dance, various kinds of writing, etc.

Item: The teacher may initiate a kind of group activity similar to that of the Stanford acting class, but substitue student writing for the Shakespeare lyric and encouraging students to write as well as speak their responses, which would be personal and impressionistic or critical based on another area such as psychology.

Teachers and Institutions. The assumptions underlying the items just described are, first, that the student will initiate his own work and that his reading and writing will be grounded in a variety of activity inside and outside the institution; second that he will become involved with a variety of people, such as teachers of fiction writing, play writing, English and European Literature, social studies, psychology, etc., as well as graduate students and school children; and, finally, that he will be offered a variety of facilities and experience (theater, modern dance) ordinarily reserved for the student with special interests or already revealed talents. If the student cannot always perform he may at least be a participating observer. And facilities need not be elaborate, since one man who knows something about drama and how the body works can, with the help of students, turn a class room into a kind of theater. The important thing is that the student work on his writing in more than one way and with more than one teacher. Institutions such as Sarah Lawrence College and Stanford University would be ideal institutions in which to undertake pilot courses. It would be necessary for the teachers involved in this project to keep a log of the year and to preserve samples of student work showing student and teacher comments done in their courses.

A model pilot course might consist of one hundred students exempted from Freshman English and allowed to enroll in a Voice Project, which would constitute an experimental unit within the freshman course. Groups of twenty students would be assigned to five teachers, each of whom would devote full teaching time to his particular students, and would allow the group to divide according to interests into smaller groups. There would be no required amount of work and no grades, though at the end of the semester each teacher would prepare individual reports indicating the quality of the student's work and the amount of progress he had made in the course. Three graduate students of definitely creative ability would be recruited for the course from within or outside the university. These men would also assist in the experiments in elementary school teaching.

II. THE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE

SECTION 51. JOHN HAWKES AND ZEESE PAPANIKOLAS. LOG BY ZEESE PAPANIKOLAS.

October 3, 1966

First meeting. Mechanical business. Discussion of some of the Voice Project ideas raised at last week's orientation session. Explanation of first assignment (to write a childhood recollection), which included some talk on the nature, purpose and elements of personal narrative. Then, as we passed out blue books, Jack announced that it was time to work and that we would 1) listen briefly to a tape and 2) write whatever we wished in response to it. (Groans, startled expressions, other signs of discomfort, some excited laughter.) Jack said that our main job of the year was to write, that we wanted to develop our sensitivity to sound -- hence the tape -- and that generally he and I wanted to work along with the rest of group. He made it clear that in this case he and I were absolutely as unfamiliar with what was on the tape as the students were. (The tape had been prepared in advance and in great secrecy by Shirley Clark.) All this seemed to suggest a game, and by the time we played the tape (a gravelly, sing-song, strangely moving woman's voice) we were all jittery yet expectant. As we learned at the end of the class, when we read Shirley's account of making the tape, the woman was Katherine Anne Porter reading the ending of "The Downward Path to Wisdom":*

> ..."Sleepy, darling? Papa's waiting to see you. Don't go to sleep until you've kissed your papa good night."
>
> Stephen woke with a sharp jerk. He raised his head and put out his chin a little. I don't want to go home," he said; "I want to go to school. I don't want to see Papa, I don't like him."
>
> Mama laid her palm over his mouth softly. "Darling, don't."
>
> Uncle David put his head out with a kind of snort. "There you are," he said. "There you've got a statement from headquarters."
>
> Mama opened the door and ran, almost carrying Stephen. She ran across the sidewalk, jerking open the car door and dragging Stephen in after her. She spun the car around and dashed forward so sharply Stephen

---

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> was almost flung out of the seat. He sat braced then with all his might, hands digging into the cushions. The car speeded up and the trees and houses whizzed by all flattened out. Stephen began suddenly to sing to himself, a quiet, inside song so Mama would not hear. He sang his new secret; it was a comfortable, sleepy song: "I hate Papa, I hate Mama, I hate Grandma, I hate Uncle David, I hate Old Janet, I hate Marjory, I hate Papa, I hate Mama..."

We listened twice to the tape and then spent about fifteen minutes writing. At first we couldn't persuade anyone to read aloud what he had written, but finally someone volunteered:

> The scene in the recording sounded like a kid and separated (or divorced) parents. The kid started off on a visit to one. I don't think this is a situation that most Stanford kids have had any contact with. Most Stanford kids seem to come from comfortable big city suburbs and stable families. If the tutoring in Voice puts kids in contact with children from one-parent homes, it's going to break up some of the social, economic and emotional isolation that student status here at Stanford brings.....
>
> --Roger Wilner

This was a fortunate beginning because the group reacted violently to the challenge, denying homogeneity, talking about small towns in southwest Texas, etc. Jack questioned Roger's mixed "voices" -- "kids," "contact," "student status" -- and the class ended up feeling that Roger's statement didn't have much to do with the taped passage.

At this point students created a lot of pleasing commotion in their eagerness to read, and we heard several more responses:

> Being rudely awakened is unplesasant. Sleep for Stephen was comforting and covering, warm and enveloping. I feel sorry for him -- I would like to sleep now in this hot, stuffy, after-lunch room. The story stimulated my maternal instincts, I think. If Stephen were my son, I'd let him sleep. I'd sleep in the next room, in case he woke up from a bad dream and needed me or called. I would do this, knowing that eventually and unavoidably he would reject me. All children reject their parents. But I believe that parents should be what sleep was for Stephen -- comforting and covering, warm and enveloping. His chant at the end was frightening -- will my child say this inside too?
>
> The lady's voice was soothing and made me as sleepy as Stephen.
>
> --Cynthia Ropes

> The car seats were black, recently dusted, hot to the touch and very uncomfortable after sitting a long time. But I dared not move, for it was all too quiet to break the monotony with a movement of the leg which would surely result in the sounding of a squeak of the cushion or a scrape along the seat. The dirty windows, structured very straight and almost too long, glistened with the steaming hot air issuing from each one of us as we heaved our hot, aching bodies, trying to breathe calmly. My eyes continually looked at the window glass in silent desperation to see

a sign of relief from without. Eventually my vision blurred from steady concentration, and I seemed to see only pictures of moving circles and figures running about before my eyes indifferently. I soon lost trust in my sight, for it appeared highly unreal and even irritating. My eyes shut.

I dreamed sleeplessly about the boy sitting next to me whose sighs reminded me of a long forgotten song -- a tune I do not want to remember.

--Kathy Arbuckle

At first it was as if the tape were spouting out sounds from an old vintage 1940 sound-track from some old movie because it sounded as if the person reading the passage were actually playing parts. When it became obvious that this was not the case, but that someone was reading aloud a prose passage, the sound of the woman's voice itself caught my attention. Her voice had a sing-song quality that seems to characterize people who try to put expression into whatever they are saying. It was, however, a husky voice, almost as if it had once had a very "clear" tone but had become husky from smoking too much. I would have liked to have met the woman.

--Francie Chew

A voice, a harsh hated voice awakened the young boy. Emerging from a quiet sleep Stephen reacted in a childlike, puerile fashion. He answers the voice of the beckoning old woman. "I don't want to go home to see Papa. I want to go to school!"

The boy, against his will, is pulled out of the sleeping chamber, hurried to the car by the fiendish voiced woman and then rushed with accelerated speed to home.

But this incident is not just a pure narrative or dialogue. I myself ask what is going on in the young boy's mind. He reacts with hostility, yet an almost insane hostility. One which is hard to truly comprehend without full knowledge of the true nature of the situation. The "oral" picture which I have received is quite incoherent. I ask in conclusion could this boy be mentally retarded, perhaps psychologically really maladjusted.

--Jim Kilgore

Without much prompting the group came up with some nice distinctions: Cynthia Rope's tendency to become involved with Stephen and to create his sensuous world, while at the same time to think like an adult; Kathy Arbuckle's totally personal and impressionistic response; the way Cynthia conveyed feeling through repetition and Kathy through the use of longer sentences. Again we had good luck in that both Francie Chew and Jim Kilgore reacted specifically to Katherine Anne Porter's reading voice -- and had such opposite reactions that the class discussion became focused with considerable intensity on exactly how much sympathy this voice made us feel for the mother. Most of the group decided that the mother was actually quite remote from Stephen, though Jack argued that he heard mostly warmth in the reading. (By the end of the discussion Jack concluded that the students' view was more justified than his own.)

The group also talked personally about the nature of childhood (which fit in nicely with the assignment we had made) and considered the problem of Stephen's hatred: was it something we all knew or was it, as Jim Kilgore suggested, the expression of a disturbed child? The argument wasn't conclusive, but again it was one we were all involved in. Several students then asked Jack and me to read:

> The blood sausage fills the sink, little bags and bladders and sacs of blood-laden tissue -- like a stone sink filled heaping with seaweed, except that the seaweed is made of black blood and the tissue of pigs -- and the blood sausage drips over the edge of the sink, the tall lamps smoke and curdle with kitchen light, the light skates across the smooth fatty surface of the old table, and Mamma is a big shadow dark and lovely and ominously eating, and my uncle is a big shadow strapped into a white collar and squeezed against the table -- thinking with his teeth, my uncle -- and there is the other shadow, the little one, with its hand reaching for the blood sausage and its little shadowy feet dangling, and finally there is the last shadow, big as the mouth of a coalmine, dark as the blood of the sausage, the shadow that does not chew, does not tap cold chimes with its fork, but sits and swells and stares at me -- and with its eyes sings to me the still song I don't always like to hear.
>
> --John Hawkes

> Did anything like this ever happen to me? I remember the back seat of cars very well, and vague anxieties, threats connected with the spongy, scratchy surfaces of the upholstery, falling asleep in discomfort, pierced at certain points of exposed skin by the fabric, sogginess of waking up with the moisture from breath or cheek sticking the skin to the woolen fabric of the seats.
>
> The litany too sounds right, although I can't recall ever framing hatred into speech -- ever allowing myself to, if the family was concerned; I must have, but I remember more exactly wordless litanies of rage, falling asleep not to lullabies; but on the point of tears....
>
> Children seem to notice the minutiae. It is a thing I can't do anymore, but when I think of childhood experience, I think of it in terms of textures, colors, sensations of drowsiness, discomfort, heat -- never cold! And all these surfaces and colors had for me then a deep, holy significance: they were riddles, symbols, significances beyond which, I thought, was the solution to a mystery. Buttons seemed strange then, shoelaces, the reflections of pans, the textures of wet sand. I would stare for hours.
>
> --Zeese Papanikolas

One of the students accused Jack of writing too "professionally" while Jack praised my own effort highly. We found Jack's "blood sausage" unclear and labored, but saw an obvious connection between his picture of a frightening father and my details of childhood anxiety.

These students seem quite lively and alert. And serious. Jack and I appreciated their noisy response to each other's work when they read it in class.

At the end of the session we individually taped each student reading aloud a short passage from a guide book in Greece. Jack got the idea when he and Clive Miller visited a second grade class at De Anza School last week, and saw the teacher (Dick Brandon) taping all his students to see if they could identify each other's voices. Jack wants to work up this idea for our next meeting.

October 10

Our second class -- a full group meeting. Today we used a matching game (based on what Dick Brandon did in his second grade class at De Anza) as a way of trying to help the students discover a person's identity through the sound of his voice and perceive relationships between a person's speaking voice and his writing.

Earlier this week, Jack and Shirley Clark and I went over the twenty passages the students wrote in our first class, and loosely ranked the passages as 1) interesting and original, 2) merely average, 3) revealing problems. We had turned under all the covers of the blue books so that while reacting we didn't know the writers' names. We then listened to the tape of the twenty students' unidentified voices reading aloud the passage from the guide book, and tried to rank the voices as we had the writing, and found that we were in agreement for about a third of the class. Then we each concluded independently that there were four students whose speaking voices could be easily identified with their writing -- and the work of these students was the basis for today's class.

We began by talking briefly about why we chose the guide book passage as a text for reading aloud: for its neutrality, sexlessness, essentially "voiceless" character (the speaker in such a passage can be anyone -- the cliche speaker is voiceless). The group tended to like the content of the passage (as we thought they might), but resisted the breezy indefinite quality of the prose.

Next we said that we were going to play back readings of the passage, the first two by girls, the second two by boys; that these members of the class would remain unidentified; that we would listen to each voice twice and then the group should call out words or phrases that characterized the student reading. We listened to the "disembodied" voices and as the students shouted out their associations, I wrote them on the board:

Class Responses to Voices

1. (Kim Dunster)
brunette
outgoing
trying to be convincing - fails
sophisticated
tour leader
detached
stress words
matter-of-fact
distinguished
attractive
confident
intelligent
control

2. (Elaine Smith)
uninterested
impersonal
rushed
conversational
vitality
unconvincing
real
honest
nervous voice
cheerleader
wholesome
higher pitched
smaller person
genuine
warm

3. (Douglas Tom)
engaged
interested
warm
personal
amusing
good mood
open-minded--intelligent
amiable
not native speaker
relaxed
quick--agile

4. (Dale Rettig)
tired
indifferent
puzzled
unusual
deep
masculine
gray
bored
powerful
high school football
monotonous drone
resonant

This was a turbulent process that was crudely but oddly accurate. Students were making personality judgments on little evidence, and a few members of the class quite rightly questioned the justice of this kind of "typing." Jack and I stressed the danger of hasty first-impressions, etc., but pointed out that there was a certain consensus of opinion, and that each person's voice was unique and in fact suggested personality. One nice moment came when Elaine Smith didn't recognize her own voice and defended it energetically (and with acumen!) against the negative qualities of all-Americanism.

Next we handed out dittoed copies of the in-class passages written by the students whose voices we had just discussed. Again the group knew only that the first two were by girls, the second two by boys, and that the task was to match voices and passages:

He slept, warm and secure, anticipating the yellow desks and wax crayons that would be his in the morning. He was jarred from his dreams by the sudden presence of his mother at his side, hushed and cool, troubled and urgent. Uncle David, large and abrupt, disturbed him further.

He was pulled into the gray, cold half-light, into the cool damp smell of upholstery. He sang secretly, rocking, a happy cradle song, a bit of warmth and love in the grayness of uncertainty and hate.

--Kim Dunster

I hate papa. When I was a little girl my papa always used to spank me when I said the wrong things in front of strangers. Like calling rare meat "bloody" or telling all the family secrets. (I used to talk a lot.) Sometimes I'd start laughing at the silliest of things and I would just laugh and laugh and giggle for ages of time. Papa would get tired of my giggling for so long about something that he thought was only worth a polite Ha Ha.

Papa also liked the idea of having us close to him. I think he figured that was a sign that he was a good father. Even now he likes to put his arms around us and kiss us on the forehead. But I don't like it at all and it makes me hate papa all the more.

Mama isn't really so bad because she doesn't try to make us love her like papa does. She's kinder than papa and doesn't always need to be right. Papa has to be right or else he has to give up an argument in such a sacrificing way that you kind of blame yourself for making papa wrong. This is very good for making kids hate their papas.

I don't know what I would feel if papa died. I would feel very bad because mama would have to work maybe and we might not have all the things that we have now, but I don't know if I would cry a lot because papa was gone. Well, I guess I would miss him some because he can be fun and nice as long as he doesn't have to be right. But it seems those times don't come half as often as the other ones.

It's too bad papa doesn't really think he's a good father. If he did I'm sure he wouldn't have to be right so much.

--Elaine Smith.

And the racing landscape gave rhythm to his song, making the soft pulsation of his heart the bass.

Never could understand -- Stevie never could understand why if Mama hated Papa she couldn't show it, couldn't sing it like he did. Always kissing, that was the focal point of his hatred. It gave his hatred food to eat -- digest so that it would grow in strength, so he could sing the song always.

Stevie's mouth was becoming even parched at the thought. His hand involuntarily broke its clutch and wiped nothing from his lip. Now that his song had been so ungraciously halted, he turned to look at his mother, half-expecting some reaction as if she had heard the loud-silent singing.

But she stared unflinchingly into the dark, while only the headlights broke the monotony. She wasn't thinking of hating Papa or even of Stevie's blundering remark. Her hatred grew, sharpened its point, flew at Uncle David. "Now you have it from headquarters," he had said. And in that instant she had begun her own song of hate -- not directed and simple like Stevie's but complicated and hidden. Uncle David was an object of subconscious, dream-hate at Papa, at Sevie, at everybody, at herself.

Like the tidal wave passes unnoticed on the open sea, so her hate was deep. It extended to the car and she swore unconsciously as she shifted its complaining gear.

--Douglas Tom

Steven had wanted to go to school. He liked to read stories about boys who went on camping trips, and climbed mountains and swam in streams. He liked to draw, and paint, and make things. And he liked to sing -- not just any song, but little songs that he made up and sang to himself on the way to and from school, and after dinner when he was alone upstairs.

Being alone was something Steven liked. He could sing anything he liked -- for instance the song about Uncle David's bald head. Uncle David wanted Steven to play baseball with him, or kick the football, or to teach Steven how to box. Steven hated this -- he wanted Uncle David to leave him alone.

His papa used to do these things with Steven a long time ago, before Papa left. Steven and his Papa used to sing songs together, but Steven had forgotten most of the songs. That's when Steven began making up songs himself, for no one else would teach him any.

--Dale Rettig

The process of attempting to match the students' voices with these written passages was again turbulent and fun but also became a dramatic exercise in criticism as the students turned from perception to discrimination and from personality to writing. The group related Kim Dunster's voice to her writing because of her "cold, formal" rhythms, related Elaine Smith's voice and writing because of her colloquial "spoken" diction and constructions. The students had some trouble with the boys. But here the argument focused sharply on rhythm, and someone insisted violently that the "beats" in the last passage (by Dale Rettig) could be related only to the student whose voice was "deep, masculine, resonant, etc." The group discussed each passage pretty thoroughly for its own sake, and we ended by hearing each of the four students read aloud his own passage. Everyone seemed to appreciate this final revealing of identity.

In commenting on papers (a childhood recollection) Jack and I are putting emphasis on different things at times. He is looking for the special word choice or distinctive rhythm, I am more easily satisfied with a "transparent" style.

I've been impressed by the vitality of many of the papers of the first assignment -- a vitality that only surfaces for an instant in most cases, but is a starting place.

October 19

Small group meeting. We had asked students to write more about childhood. The assignment was in two parts -- first, to write at most two pages creating an impression of something concrete or of a place or experience from childhood, and, second, to write at most two more pages handling these same materials analytically. Today's class was based on Jim Wright's impression/analysis about sitting on the chimney of his house as a boy. One question Jack and I decided in advance to take up was how to know the sex of this speaker. So we started by asking Paul, George and Elaine to go into separate rooms and write imaginary pieces pretending to be children on the tops of chimneys. We were counting on Elaine to write unmistakably like a girl. While they were out of the room, the class heard Jim read his paper.

> Probably the most important part of our house was the roof, especially the red brick chimney near the north end. Many afternoons I would sit on top of this chimney and look at the scenery. To the north were two reservoirs nestled between rolling farm land. Occasionally as I watched red balers would cut through the blue-grass dropping heavy bales where the grass had been.
>
> On the west and south were more frame houses not so different from ours. But this wasn't the town; the houses weren't packed together. Each home had a large green yard filled with trees. Yet there weren't many houses and the rolling fields soon replaced them.
>
> Toward the east lay the town (if you can call two thousand people a town). The business district was almost half a mile away at the bottom of the hill I was standing on and even it was hidden by trees. Beyond the town there were more houses climbing the gentle slopes towards farmland.
>
> Somehow all of this was my little world, but even I didn't know why this view fascinated me. I didn't realize the beauty in the landscape, yet I often stood on the chimney and watched my world. For this reason the room was the most important part of our house.
>
> --Jim Wright

(Jack's marginal comments:

"I would sit on top of this chimney" -- lovely idea! but doesn't it need some sort of comment? After all, the experience is fairly unusual. Also, you might well convey (visualize) distance?

"Nestled," "gentle slopes," "fascinated" -- who's speaking now?

The repetition in this last sentence is simply a kind of false ending --

Nice effort. This passage is fairly close to the natural rhythms and

> tones of your speaking voice, and does generate a pleasing quality out of "simple" prose. But I think you'll hear that many of these sentences are the same length and begin in the same way -- perhaps because of a curious kind of restraint. Don't you hear considerable embarrassment in "this was my little world"?)

Jim's reading was recorded on tape. We then taped Paul and George reading this same passage and compared the three versions of the piece. Jim's own reading was flat and did suggest a "country boy's" voice, which seemed appropriate to his world. Paul and George read quickly and (as someone said) as if they had never seen rolling country. Finally Elaine came in and read her imagined account:

> (Oh wow! It would sure be a long way to fall.)
>
> There are three of Ting's balls that ended up on the roof when I forgot to let go soon enough. And there's Dan's super ball that didn't quite make it over the roof like it was supposed to. (I always wondered what happened to it.)
>
> I feel like if I stood up and started dancing, Mary Poppins would come out of the sky and play with me. It's jolly to be up so high and so far away from the rest of the people. It feels somehow very special.
>
> Oh there goes Wendy Heffner playing her trumpet again. She's honestly improved quite a bit from a few months ago. You should have heard her then.
>
> I really do feel like dancing or singing or something. When you sit on a chimney, you just can't sit there doing nothing. I guess looking at everything down below is fun enough, but somehow you can't look at it in the same way you do when you're down there yourself.
>
> I honestly think that if I jumped off the chimney right now, I could fly. Or at least be able to walk around without falling down into our rose garden. (Ouch!) Maybe I'd better not try it. I could be wrong.
>
> But I don't think so....
>
> --Elaine Smith

This was an exciting session and I think a great deal was accomplished. The students were able to hear the relaxed, slow, rather soft voice Jim used to read his piece, which helped them to talk about this writing on a quite technical level: short sentences, repetitive constructions, equal sentence length, a panoramic vision. Elaine's lively, childlike fantasy brought us to a discussion of "male" and "female" styles -- immediacy and personal involvement of her interior monologue, compared to detached, ordered view in Jim's. Class ended, but most students stayed on and we discussed the second half of Jim's paper, a rather labored conceit comparing a storm to a battle:

> Up here on our roof I can see everything a lot better. That's why I often come up to watch a storm march in. Far away I can see the battle raging. The silent cannons flash their warnings for the rest of the people to go to bed. I'm the only one left to watch as the storm marches

on. A shell explodes softly in the distance. Then another. The explosions are much closer now. The air tingles with the fresh clean fumes of battle. As the storm gets closer the racing breeze begins to roar in my ears. It surges into my lungs and carries out the dust of every day life. Bombs burst all around me; the cannons and flares hurt my eyes. The wind thunders its message -- power, power, power.

Alone I wait to love the fury, to hear the living breath. It lifts me from my earthly perch. Deep within the heart I'll hear the voice of life. But the rains realize the danger and drive me from the heart back to the roof-top perch. Back to a dry bed where the rest of the people lay.

(Jack's marginal comments:

My own feeling is that the storm is a good idea, but that the contrast between adult metaphor and childish phrasing and short sentences is unfortunately extreme. Paradoxically, if the metaphor had been even more exaggerated it might have worked? The second paragraph suggests a very different -- and totally adult -- speaker, and part of this shift is due to prose rhythms becoming metrical. Read the passage aloud....Why are "rains realize" and "rest of the people lay" a return to the child's voice?)

Students discussed the idea that a change in visual perspective might change the viewer's feelings about the scene, and were able to see that the methodical slow detached voice of Jim's analysis (summary of town, hay-balers, etc.) wasn't appropriate to a dramatic scene, and (having "heard" his voice in that piece) to point out shifts from adult to child stances, and the rather overblown rhetoric in the second. We worried about the problem of a writer attempting to assume child's consciousness. George said that Jim's reading of "power, power, power," did not convey any energy at all. But the class liked Jim's own discovery of metaphor as a way to create an impression of an experience and, despite all the problems of "mixed" voices, thought he had handled the exercise well. We briefly heard portions of George's piece and of Paul's. Not much done with them, except to talk about falseness of a rhetorical cliche in Paul's.

October 20

Met with Douglas Tom and Cynthia Ropes and continued discussing "impression/analysis" papers. Writing discussed. Cynthia's dittoed and distributed. Her first paragraph was a Dr. Spock version of importance of bedtime routine, the analysis portion of her exercise:

Regular sleep habits and a pleasant bedtime routine assure a child's

> physical and mental health. Parents should cultivate the bedtime techniques which combine a sense of loving security with a firm routine. First, they should set an hour considering both the age and the needs of the child. If the hour is too early, the child learns to associate sleep with restlessness and tension. A warning approximately five minutes before the time gives the child a chance to calm down and put away his toys. He should not feel that he is being gotten out of the way, and bed should never be used as a punishment. After the child has been encouraged to accomplish some of the nighttime preparation himself, there is a special time shared just between the parent and child. This is the perfect time for quiet conversation and prayers. Children often like stories to be read, but only one, not "just one more"! A relaxed atmosphere induces sleep; parents can help their child relate to his safe, controlled, and predictable world, by making bedtime a quiet, loving, routine.
>
> --Cynthia Ropes

Jack had commented that this prose implied an attitude on the autor's part to the reader, rather than voice, and we discussed what this meant, what kind of attitude (condescending) and whether or not this attitude in effect was irreconcilable with voice. Students then discussed whether there could be such a thing as voice in a technical paper and I equated voice part with honesty, and in this limited sense, said yes, there could be voice in a technical work. Cynthia's second paragraph was an effective impressionistic rendering of going to sleep as a child:

> curtained darkness of a wintry night with a crack of light from the hall bringing security. after kisses and prayers the sheets are cold and i curl in a ball, to concentrate the body warmth that will soon produce sleep. the heaviness of flannel and three layers of blankets on top of me. the clean cool linen smell of the pillow beneath my cheek. the familiar, worn smooth teddy bear in the curve of my body. the tension of the day oozing slowly from my muscles. contented drowsiness, heavy eyelids closing slowly, warm thumb sucked in a wet, warm mouth. all curled in a ball to drift unthinking into sleep.

The voice was adult. I had her re-write the paragraph in the language of a child, and we compared the two. The in-class paragraph was flat and coy and embarrassing, as she herself thought it would be, and we discussed seriousness as it related to the adult voice of her first paragraph, and the importance of mood (a thing a child cannot express). Question which set this off: why is "warm thumb sucked in a wet, warm mouth" a moving and good line in her first paper, and not embarrassing. From her in-class writing: "I know I'm supposed to be a big girl, but sometimes I still suck my thumb" -- an example of coyness. Very good session, read two poems by Irving Feldman at the end of it.

October 24

Small group meeting. Distributed dittoed copies of "A Taste of Honey"* and discussed it as poem.

Cold winds may blow
O'er the icy sea,
But I'll take with me
The warmth of thee.
A taste of honey,
A taste much sweeter than wine.
He will return,
He will return.
He'll come back for the honey and me.

I'll leave with you
My heart to wear,
And may it e'er
Remind you of
A taste of honey,
A taste much sweeter than wine.
He will return,
He will return.
He'll come back for the honey and me.

This was a very long and sometimes tedious process involving taped readings by Kathy, by Dale, then by both of them together. The problem was to see if there were two voices, a man's and a woman's, speaking in dialogue, in soliloquy, or if there was one voice, a female one remembering a man's voice from a past time. The quality of the song and its meaning hinged on this distinction. The students finally reached the latter conclusion after some rather repetitive and nit-picking and occasionally sharp arguments. We heard Barbra Streisand sing the song and this confirmed the one-voice theory, as well as showed what different emphasis of voice can do for the interpretation of a song. We looked at "I am a Rock" briefly, and then heard it, commenting on the great difference in mood and tone between the song as written and as sung. Paul Raymore was good here.

Next we talked briefly about Paul's monologue of October 20 and directed the discussion at the conflict between his colloquial voice and his old-maidish/Dean-of-Studentish voice:

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*"A Taste of Honey," reprinted by permission of Songfest Music Corporation.

> I can't understand it. I just can't understand it. How can eighteen- and nineteen-year-old young men act so juvenile? I mean, a water fight is alright, but why pick a night when everybody has classes the next day to stage one? I realize that in college the academic pressures build up very rapidly on the individual, and that sometimes you just have to let off steam. However, when you let yourself go and have no regard for the feelings of others, then I feel you overstep your rights. It all started when some guy threw a water filled balloon into the window of another person. This called for instant retaliation which was also quite noisy. This disturbed the victim's neighbor who decided to join the fun. Soon there were hundreds of guys out in the plaza making noise, letting off steam, sure, but also they were disturbing the time other individuals had put aside for study. I don't think that the offenders realized they were making it impossible for others to get their work done, but I do think that the thought should have crossed their minds and that they should have put themselves in the place of the few who wanted to study and found some other less disturbing way to relieve the tensions of academic life here at Stanford.
>
> --Paul Raymore

It turned out that actually Paul had been one of the offenders in the waterfight episode this monologue attempts to criticize. We talked about his lack of understanding of his involvement in the experience and what it had to do with the failure of the piece as satire. A longer discussion of Kathy's Oct. 20 letter:

> Outsider,
>
> She doesn't care anymore, or so she says. She screams and pulls at her hair to no avail when she's alone in her room, but no one hears her, or at least no one mentions a word about it. On the other hand, she is very quiet. She studies constantly in complete silence. Few people know her name much less that she really lives in that little room three flights up, the first door on the right. (No, she doesn't really scream out loud; she'd be too afraid to draw attention. But she does pull at her hair occasionally when she is not biring her fingers.)
>
> She never wonders what I'm doing, whether I'm fishing, drinking, eating, smoking reading, sleeping, or grocery shopping all day long. No salutations, greetings, or good-byes. She just writes again and again reminding me that she's just thinking. It is like a phantasmagorial fantasy, this dream life of hers; all sorts of things are happening, but there's no pattern. She sees chaos in herself, and yet it means something to her. She finds it all pleasantly frustrating.
>
> It's no use. Quit badgering me, I say to her, leave me alone and work things out for yourself. She is so preoccupied with her every thought and action that she insists upon knowing the purpose and answer to everything. She hates herself for loving herself and ends up feeling totally indifferent -- yet she cares, I know she does or else she wouldn't keep writing over and over again as if wanting someone to give her strength. However, she would never write again if I wrote back to her -- she would feel ashamed that she had revealed her weaknesses to an outsider.
>
> On second thought, sometimes she is fine; she is normal. She worries about not having time to wash her hair and eating unbalanced meals. She used to wear make-up; now she wears none. She's reading more now, just

> incidental novels that look appealing. She is no crazier than you or I....
> She's probably only obsessed with herself. I cannot help her. No longer can I bear to act as her only escape. I don't know, really. I just don't know. At any rate, I'm tired, and I loathe having to write something seemingly coherent to an outsider. It's done now. Can you help her? Lift your head from sleep and find out where she's running.
> --Kathy Arbuckle

Jack and I thought we saw a complicated drama of a girl writing about herself as if she were a third person in this excellent piece, but wondered about the masculine voice of the narrator: the narrator, as it turned out, was a man in Kathy's conception, but I think the class saw the marvelous suppleness of a single consciousness assuming three roles, almost transparently, in this piece. All in all a somewhat slow day. But the discussion of the song was the best we've had so far on a literary text, and I think a lot was accomplished by it. Have been reading the unsent letter assignment of Oct. 20. I'm not so sure it was a good one. Some of the best students, of course, wrote interesting letters, but then some of them didn't. The rest of the letters seemed pretty uninteresting to me and a few were so personal, comment on them was difficult or impossible. Many were in fact sendable letters, and as such were horribly flat.

October 25

Met with small group. Kim read aloud her letter of October 20 paper (assignment: "a letter that can't be sent") and it was taped. We had copies distributed.

> Dear Ebe,
> I shall never send this letter to you, for something like this should be said directly and into the eyes. Even if given the opportunity, I don't think that I could do that. Perhaps things are better if left where they are- but there is still a feeling of unrest in me whenever I think of you.
>
> The first time we saw one another, I think the eyes spoke first. The other boys were doffing imaginary caps, bowing deeply, but their gestures, though civil, were not very friendly- merely for the benefit of entertaining one another. As I shook countless hands, I noticed you, standing in the shadow of the door, and your eyes, though shy, invited me in. The understanding cheered me. You seemed quite the struggling student- tall, lean, dark, with sensitive, nearly Arabic features, hardly "typical" of southern Germany. I was fascinated, not swept away, by your slow smile.
>
> Ebe, maybe I combined too much of that which was really you with that which made up your environment. The cobblestones, the trickling old foun-

tains, the children's choirs- all made me feel very sentimental and idealistic. And this was no dream existence, for the people really cared deeply for those fountains and choirs. We climbed steeples and visited museums, and took long walks on the city wall. I had no thoughts of flirtation or personal gain, for I was happily absorbing my new surroundings and friendships. You liked me very much, and I was glad, but not flattered. Every word and gesture was honest and spontaneous.

And then things changed. Though you apologized, the fault was mine. After a long evening of "Gemutlichkeit" and beer in the Jazz Keller, you and a friend shouted and pounded on our front door, while Irma and I bolted it shut, giggling and shushing you furiously. After that, things were never the same. My objective half was amused by your intoxicated, wishy-washy, sentimental outbursts- I had every right to be embarrassed by your singing, and my eyes agreed with your schoolmates, "Poor old Ebe's had a bit too much!" I was surprised by the sincerity of your feelings.

So, disregarding the fact that you would be chided and reminded by your friends, I furthered your humiliation by resorting to feminine wiles. I avoided you for a week. When you called, I told them to tell you I was busy washing my hair- I washed my hair seven times that week. Once, when I saw you on the street, I pretended I handn't, and you lowered your eyes and rode on. I found that I was actually flattered by your concern. My objective side reassured me that it was all almost comical, like something by Cornelia Otis Skinner. Besides, I was only sixteen, and why should I feel it necessary to go beyond the impersonality and frivolity of social acquaintances?

But my other side, the little girl who wept openly at the sight of a dead bird, knew otherwise. I know that I should have gone to you and reassured you immediately of the meaningfulness of your friendship, forgiven your outburst. I saw your deep, wounded eyes.

But I didn't. I dismissed it all and sat with you and your friends, flirting with your brother, making witty remarks, ignoring you and hating myself. By the end of the summer, we were impersonal, detached, casual acquaintances. And had I even looked, I doubt that you eyes would have ever again invited me in.

Ebe, forgive me. I am sure that you have regained your pride and "senses," though I will never forget your hurt and shock. And strangely enough, I hope that you have not forgotten me- not as the wily, sly girl I became, but as the concerned, true friend I was, and will always be.

Sincerely and with love,
Kim

(Jack's marginal comments:

These pages suggest the kind of poise, sensitivity, intelligence we expect in your writing. And obviously you're making a fine effort to be true to the experience. Yet even after a reasonable lapse of time you're still curiously involved with these materials?

The beginning of the second paragraph reveals your own writing rhythms, and the catalogue (cobblestones, fountains, choirs) and concrete details of the third paragraph are pleasing. But some of the phrasing on this page (such as "your eyes... invited me in) would make many readers uncomfortable, it seems to me. But perhaps the central problem is evident in 1) "fascinated, not *swept away*...." , 2) "I had no thoughts of flirtation or personal gain." What do you yourself make of the qualification in (1) and the incongruity in (2) as well as the insistence in both?

Well, the tendency of your own voice to disappear, the shifts in istance and feeling (the coldness of "civil" in the second paragraph, for instance), the excessive compression of the fourth paragraph (an eagerness not to explain or explore?), and even the unclear argument itself -- to me all this suggests a certain evasion, something unconvincing about your self-judgment.

What is it that would really make you hesitate to send this letter? Your verbal ability is admirable. But a good many words here are clues to feelings you haven't dealt with --)

A very lively discussion first of the propriety of reading a personal letter to someone else. Jim Wright was embarrassed by certain passages. After much work on the tape recorder, with Kim's reading of the piece and a discussion of her writing voice as an extension of her speaking voice; after her re-telling the crucial part of the story on tape and explaining it, we found Jim's embarrassment to be prompted not by the honesty of the passages, but by the very fact that the passages he pointed out were the evasive ones -- the ones where Kim was adopting a condescending, pitying attitude to a young man whom she really was infatuated with. Jim remarked that her reading sounded typical of a prep-school girl, and Kim replied:

KIM: Right away I could see what was coming. It was this sophisticated, deteached, prep-school image, and I --

JIM W: Prep-school is sophisticated? (*Laughter*). That would be one of my last impressions.

JACK: Well, what did you mean by prep-school, Jim? (Laughter).

JIM: That's a good question. Well, I guess I sort of have an idea of--oh--pseudo-sophistication if you want to call it that. And an intense desire to please the teacher -- what we call grade-grub.

KIM: You got that through my reading?

JIM: Yep, through the reading.

KIM: But you said the same thing last week too.

JACK: But the discussion last week was divided. Something about your recorded voice did make a lot of people think of private school. But when we tried to define what a "private school voice" might be, I think we used such words as "controlled," "cultured," "graceful," "elegant." That's what most of us meant by sophistication. What about it, Jim?

JIM: Well, I want to defend myself. She comes from sort of the Big City. This could be the same thing as a prep-school background.

KIM: I come from the suburbs.

JIM: So what? (Much talking at once.) I come from a hick town of two thousand people.

* * *

JACK: All right, Kim, what about the sentence, "My objective half was amused by your intoxicated, wishy-washy, sentimental outburst?"

KIM: This was what it was to the other kids too.

JACK: What about to you? Isn't your own judgment still that he was "wishy-washy"? But you tell us only that he was banging on the door. Does that mean "wishy-washy"?

KIM: No, this was something else that happened. He'd been signing and just -- well -- he had been a little bit wishy-washy. He got drunk, but he wasn't just jovial and all fun. He got terribly -- you know -- sentimental and everything else....

JIM: That's wishy-washy?

JACK: What do you think Ebe's sentimentality was an expression of?

KIM: His sensitivity.... I didn't get this across. First of all, it wasn't as if Ebe got drunk a lot or anything else. And it wasn't as if the others were really humoring him when they said "Poor old Ebe's had a bit too much." Because he was not an outcast but close to it. He was a very sensitive boy. He wasn't content with beer fests and sticking in Rothenburg -- he had great dreams of someday coming to America and everything else. He wasn't especially athletic. He was just a very honest, sincere boy, and very quiet. And he wasn't that well liked. I mean, the kids had grown up with him so that it was sort of "Poor old Ebe, he's in a world all his own, but we'll take him in once in awhile." And that evening I was with him I knew him now as a sensitive, wonderful warm person. I didn't mention that much to my German sister or anybody else. It was a sort of very personal friendship. And we went out and the boys kept saying, "Come on Ebe, have another, have another." You know...they really enjoyed it. And that tormented me....

JACK: (Interrupting) They were trying to make him drunk.

KIM: Well, they were drunk themselves, so why not?

JACK: But you said "intoxicated" --

KIM: I meant drunk. And he did drink too much and it got to the point where he sang wonderful songs and everything else. And I was very embarrassed because he wasn't doing it in a spirit of joviality. I mean, he was being boyish and everything else, but they were enjoying it for the wrong reasons. And they sat there and it was more like, you know, "Poor old Ebe's had a bit too much," and nudged him and everything else. I was hurt by it. Then we got home and we said good night and everything was okay -- and all of a sudden there was this tremendous pounding and, see, Ebe was with a friend who was just chiding him on -- "Oh, come on this is great fun." You know. And true, it was terribly funny even to me at that moment because the whole house was quiet, dead silent, and here they stood, you know, shouting and drunk and everything else. But he was terribly humiliated by the whole thing. He really was. Kids were teasing him for days afterwards because this was something that Ebe usually didn't do and expecially, you know, over a girl. And then (I hate to be personal), then I realized that he was wrong, but that I should have given him some sympathy, some understanding. But I didn't. I just played the very -- I took an easy way out --

STEVE: I still don't understand what's happening.

KIM: You still don't understand?

STEVE: Why did you shun him?

KIM: Why? Because it's so easy -- I -- Okay... Something like this happened to you, right?

HELENE: Yes.

KIM: When a girl meets a boy like this, she has two alternatives (and you'll agree after pre-reg week here) -- first, she can be very superficial, you know, just all fun and games, "Let's go out and everything else, but I won't get to know you -- you won't get to know me and we'll just play the boy-girl role." But you know, it doesn't affect anyone that deeply. Or she can actually become conerned for him as a person. But for this you've got to sacrifice -- you have to give up something of yourself.

JACK: Why?

JIM: Works that way. No questions.

STEVE: Well, if you thought so much of this guy before, how come all of a sudden as soon as the worst thing that could have happened happened, how come from that moment on you shunned him?

KIM: I don't know. And that's why I wrote this. Because --

STEVE: It seems sort of weird, like all of a sudden --

KIM: I know that Ebe would have understood right away if I had gone to him. He would have been terribly touched. But it was so much easier to wash your hair. And to be sixteen and frivolous. And this was actually rather funny, and that was it...

STEVE: But "wishy-washy" is supposed to mean you didn't like him. I think you did. Nothing you've said sounds funny.

Chuck read his letter into the tape recorder and Jack also read the same letter, but was dissatisifed with his "melodramatic" (his word) reading.

Dear Baba:

It's been three years now since you died; I can still see you in that wheel chair now, up in the sun room. You were "sort of" in your natural surroundings there, if you don't mind the expression. There with all the old Readers Digests stacked in their shiny glass cabinet. Maybe there was something in them for you, a taut cord with the past. A past of straw hats, ankle length dresses, and parasols, of steam engines, coal shoots and chestnut trees.

You always used to look so sad staring through the bleak window that looked out on the black driveway and the red tile roof of the garage. But when we moved you, you didn't like that either. Maybe it was the sun you liked, which used to pour through the window, leaving the shadows of the aged etched on your weary face, before spreading out on the thick brown crocheted blanket which Maga knitted for you. The room was always so still, once in a while an airplane would go over or one of the Bruno boys would race up the pass way in their old Ford. It used to make Maga mad, do you remember that? But these sounds faded, often before you ever noticed them.

It was hard to make you smile. If by chance one of us did something very funny or annoyed Maga you would smile but then just when you should have laughed, you sobbed instead. No one knew then, why, but I think I know now. Maybe when even a flicker of happiness passed to you you would remember what it used to be like -- Sunday dinners with the cool glass Martini Jug (don't forget you used to let me shake it) and those big turkeys you insisted on carving. After dinner remember zebra cake and those smelly cigars you and dad used to smoke? Maga used to have a fit, that we'd leave a stray marble out and you would step on one.

The clock that was over the fireplace, we have it on our mantle now. When I hear its chimes sometimes I think of you, more often I don't. I used to get mad at you when you weren't able to speak or when I had something better to do, and didn't want to help put you to bed. Later I thought about it, I'm sorry about it now.

I can't say that I exactly loved you or Maga but rather I loved the past that was so much a part of you. It may sound terrible that I will stop now, forever, because I have to go pick up my laundry. But this letter is just sentiment and the laundry is a necessity.

Take care of yourself,
Chuck

(Jack's comments:

Well, this is a remarkable effort to say the least! Now and again you lapse into your familiar "literary" phrasing -- "taut chord," "shadows of the aged etched...." But the concrete detail, the vaguely foreign (Russian? Jewish?) word choice and rhythms, the directness of human feeling -- all this is warm and powerful indeed. The syntax here is, of course, "smashed. And though your final reversal is interesting, isn't the last line -- "take care of yourself" -- simply too casual to be credible? At any rate this temperament is purely your own, the description of the turkey dinner is quite wonderful. This is your strongest and most consistent effort so far.)

We had time only to point out the strange speech rhythms -- inverted speech order suggesting foreign speech to Jack; the marvelous flux of a nostalgic comment with a realistic hard-headed adjustment, the rightness of emotion and amount. This was a very good session, emotional and earnest. The students began by questioning a little our right to read "personal" documents, but enjoyed the class and its honesty, I think. As far as the question of personal materials goes -- I'm still not sure on it myself -- I want to see more student reactions and talk to students whose privacy may have been injured. There is a difference here between embarrassment which is temporary and desirable even, and injury of privacy, and the line separating them is still unclear to me.

October 26

Passed out dittoed copies of Jim Kilgore's monologue (a childhood recollection) of October 20.

> You didn't know Bobby, did you? Neither did I, really, until last winter when he got sick. That's when I used to come over after school to tell him the homework assignments and just sit and talk to him for awhile. This was his room; I can hardly recognize now it's so bare; even the old grey rug is gone. These shelves used to be full of books. Bobby had all the Hardy Boy stories and more sea story books than I've ever seen. He'd let me borrow one anytime I wanted to. Sometimes I'd sit by his desk and leaf through a book or just watch Bobby work with his stamp collection. He would often sit there in the corner where the desk was and work with his stamps for hours, putting them in a large album. I started collecting stamps myself and even offered a few to Bobby, but I could never find a stamp that Bobby didn't already have.
>
> Oh! I wonder what happened to the plants we put here by the window. The raspberry bush and that orange tree we grew from a seed-- They're gone, probably thrown away; but maybe not, Bobby's mother might have let Bobby keep them. She had always cared for them before, makeing sure they had plenty of water. She even told me one day that it was a good idea to have a few plants in the room, but violets or zineas, she thought, would be better.
>
> --Jim Kilgore
> (excerpted)

(Jack's comments:

I confess that the situation here is fairly unclear. The opening passage suggests that Bobby died -- if not, why has his room been stripped? What's the purpose of all this withholding of information? If Bobby is emotionally ill, why not say so? But more important, it's extremely difficult to identify in any way the listener here. In fact, I find it difficult to believe that one narrator is really talking to someone at all -- and it may be that the absence of a genuine listener accounts for your own absence. (This speaking voice doesn't reveal a single identity or personality, you

> see). Again (as in your first effort) this monologue suffers because it's not personal. I feel strongly that you should try once more to recreate something you clearly remember from the past -- and should avoid fictionalizing your materials! But let's talk about the concrete detail here -- the plants suggest energy and at least some kind of personal significance.

Jim taped this piece and class discussed its ambiguities. We wrote questions about it and saw in it doleful intimation of death, long passage of time, an adult narrator, as well as serious problems. Jim spoke then and said he intended the piece as a simple one: a boy is telling another boy about his friend Bobby, who used to live in the house the listener has just moved into. Jim then went into the other room and recorded his thoughts on the piece, while the rest of us began discussing George Schmitten's letter to God (assignment: a letter that cannot be sent);

> Dear God,
>
> After attempting to read a lesson in history -- which I intend to go back to after this letter -- I have come to the conclusion that I do not belong here or anywhere. The war in Viet-Nam is a complete waste, and I don't belong in waste.
>
> West. Civ., while being very interesting, cannot gain my attention. For that matter, nothing abstract can.
>
> Even a university is human -- it can make mistakes. Maybe that's why they have such a firm seat in society. By looking at my high school record they missed the entire point. They did not look at me. Consequently, they accepted my high school records and some recommendations by people who don't know me. They didn't accept me.
>
> The way things stand now, I will get a very poor grade from West. Civ., I will pass English and math, and I will flunk German. All in all, if I try, I may last my frosh year.
>
> --George Schmitten
> (excerpt)

I was trying to bring out the contradictions of this piece -- what I took to be a flip attitude to rather serious matters. The piece, however, was meant in dead earnest -- something which Jack saw, but I missed. But we didn't get into it, for Jim returned and we heard his tape -- 1) Jim's piece turns out to be a complete fiction, except for details of the room, which were mostly a remembrance of Jim's own room. 2) Jim kept talking about how he would make this into a better story and kept returning to this idea of story and hovering about details of room. 3) His taped reading of the piece, which we heard again, was very effective, with good rhythms and a dramatic aspect not heard in monologue -- but, thinks Jack, strangely detached. All this is a little disturbing. We talked about "Bobby" who is missing from the piece as a presence as much as he is missing physically, and about Jim who is strangely missing from his own room, who feels some need to fictionalize himself out of existence in the piece. I pointed out that this missing subject or presence abutting against the hard real images of the room's content is perhaps what gave the piece its doleful, distant tone. (A word which comes to me now -- its eeriness.) All in all, the free association tape Jim made was a disappointment as far as a retelling of the story in a truer form or as an improvement in the piece's style or voice: but his few admissions about the reality of certain parts of it -- about the room, for instance, were interesting. I got to talk to Schmitten about his letter to God after class. The guarded almost formal tone of the letter, its being addressed not to God, really, or to a friend, or to himself, but to a general audience; his skimming the surface of his problems -- telling only what's bothering him, but not why, or to what extent, accounts for the flip tone I heard, or for the mixed up values and selfishness Jack and also George himself saw in the piece. I think I was able to get this across to him, but he has real problems with his writing, a deep reticence and inflexibility in his prose, which he realizes, but doesn't feel he can easily mend. He has trouble in detaching himself from the work, both as he writes (he feels he writes spontaneously, but agrees it doesn't sound spontaneous) and as he re-reads for correction. We talked about possible techniques to break through this problem -- automatic writing, writing while emotionally attuned, re-reading in many different voices or tape-recorders, listening to others read his work.

November 7

Big meeting. We listened to a tape with sound effects which Jim Wright had made of his parachute jump piece.

> I sat in the door, my legs hanging into empty space. The wind whipped my cuffs and whistled through the holes in my helmet; three thousand feet below lay my target. There, that white cross was where I was supposed to land. But even if I couldn't hit the cross I still had a huge brown circle of "soft" sand, and I knew that there would be people down there waiting for me; I even had a two-way radio to talk to them. But where were they? I couldn't see anything but brown sand and white cross.
>
> But what if I didn't even land in the sand pit- what if I landed on that black asphalt under me now. Yeh, hitting the runway would be sort of like jay walking- I'd have the right of way but. . .
>
> I looked up. Inside the plane were five more boys dressed exactly like me- white jump-suits, gray helmets, sunken eyes, and large green packs

on their chest and back. They were waiting on me. I reached up and gave a tug on my static line; it was tight. My jump instructor smiled and nodded. It was about that time.

There was the target just barely ahead. I still couldn't see anyone down there, but I don't guess it would make too much difference. What could happen? I've even got an inflatable life vest in case I land in someone's pond.

Suddenly silence; the wind died to a gentle rush. The engine had been throttled back for my jump. I started to turn.

"Standby!"

The ground was still waiting there, white and brown and farther out green and red and yellow. It was almost time; it was almost time. The target was right under me. The cross was at the tip of my boot. The silence was ready. The target was ready. Even I thought I was ready. If only I could see those people down there waiting for me.

I felt a strong tap at my shoulder. "Jump!"

But I didn't jump- I just fell.

--Jim Wright

(Jack's marginal comments:

Well, this is an interesting effort to create the drama and anxiety of the jump. However, the tense short sentences are exactly what we might expect. Longer "silky" sentences might better convey tension, speed, height, etc. And a few specific concrete details (humorous, perhaps) would help. More important, a single time and consciousness would be much more effective than your present mixture of recollection and immediacy, narration and interior monologue. You might have used the present tense throughout? My own feeling is that the phrase "waiting on me" suggests fine possibilities for a dialect voice.)

The tape was much better than the story, for the sound effects were able to supply a concrete reality which the story lacked, and the reading voice to supply a drama and colloquial tone missing from the prose itself. Some of this was seen by the class, but while they enjoyed the tape they were not too interested in talking about it.

We then listened to a tape of Truman Capote reading parts of his story "Children on their Birthdays." Class response to this was excellent. The drama he supplied in "characterizing" the voices of the story in his reading indicated to the class his "sensitivity" to human individuality. A bit of dialogue contained the expletive "uh uh" and the class liked the way he read it, so Jack prompted them to present different renderings of these syllables to show that raw sound can express ideas and emotions. Elaine Smith, of her own accord, turned around in her chair and wrote "uh uh" on the board, then as each student "said" something in this invented language and the rest of the group translated the message, Elaine tried to keep record on the board. This was a lot of fun and quite successful. We then talked about the world of "Children on their

Birthdays." Jack's summary will show drift of class discussion: "A vision of childhood as fairytale, remote world, in which the ancient innocence of child is destroyed by invasion of the real world."

This Jack sees as basis for Capote's sympathy for Perry -- but we were able to see a little Capote _imposing_ his fictional world on not entirely congenial materials in _In Cold Blood_. We talked about Capote's description of Nancy Clutter's room -- "frothy as a ballerina's tutu" -- as follows:

ALL: (_More or less together_) What's a tutu?

JACK: Somebody explain what a tutu is?

ELAINE: I have no idea. The only thing I can think of is a little skirt that sticks straight out.

KIM: It's like net, it's real lacy.

JACK: And it's got a lot of folds in it, or pleats or something?

KIM: It's gathered. Very gathered.

(_Much mumbling and laughing_)

JACK: What about this "picture," Elaine?

ELAINE: It's personal. It sounds feminine; I can't imagine a boy's room being very personal, not as much as a girl's room....A girl's room seems to be, well -- probably just because I'm a girl -- it seems much more open, just sort of friendly.

JIM W.: What? A girl's room seems more friendly?

ELAINE: Well, that's probably because I'm a girl; I haven't seen that many boy's rooms. My brothers' rooms weren't very personal.

JIM: I haven't seen many girls' room that were particularly open! (_Laughter_) A boy's room, I mean, you see his whole personality thrown on the floor. (_Much laughter_) ... If a girl's got any personality, her clothes are thrown on the floor -- but the personality's hidden in a little box in the closet or something.

JACK: So what are you trying to say, Elaine?

ELAINE: I don't know. Somehow it just sounds right.

JACK: "Nancy's room was the smallest, most personal in the house --" Cynthia, does this sentence convey anything personal?

CYNTHIA: No, it doesn't.

JACK: Capote describes the room as being "Girlish, and as frothy as a ballerina's tutu."

CARLOS: Well, doesn't that imply that Nancy has a personality that's set? -- her own personal ideas?

CYNTHIA: I think that she's just like the perfect, all-American girl.

(Simultaneous and vehement opinions)

JACK: All right, all right. Can we justify this idea? Is she, or is she not? Is there any such thing?

ELAINE: I thought he made her too goody-goody -- I just didn't think she was altruistic.

JACK: What about this "ballerina" sentence now? (Much laughter, broken comments)

JIM: Nancy's a combination of the Virgin Mary and Betty Crocker. (Laughter) That's what she is. (Exclamations from girls) ... Well, it's true!

ELAINE: I didn't think she was that bad. There was that comment from the teacher, who said they went to the Clutter's house, and the teacher and the boy and girl had no idea they were so rich. The Clutters just didn't assume any airs. I think Nancy was -- nice.

JACK: But what about "ballerina's tutu?"

GIRLS: What about it?

PAUL: We've never seen one.

JACK: Of course you have.

PAUL: Well, how can you describe a ballerina's tutu as being frothy?

(Class shouts approval of "frothy")

PAUL: I'd say frilly or something --

ELAINE: No, they're frothy, they're all fluffy --

JACK: Do you find this figure of speech an appropriate way to describe the silly conglomeration of Nancy's room? Does it work, or doesn't it? If it works, how does it work? What is a ballerina? What's a ballerina got?

PAUL: Incredibly strong legs.

JACK: Exactly, she's strong. What else is she?

GIRL: Graceful?

JACK: Graceful. Yes. What else?

ELAINE: Attractive.

PAUL: Devoted.

JACK: What did you say? Devoted? You mean intensely committed. (Laughter throughout all of this) And you say feminine. Why feminine?

PAUL: Well as opposed to a washerwoman or something like that. (Laughter)

JACK: Are we sure that a ballerina is the "archtype" of femininity?

(Shouts of "no!")

JACK: Why not?

JIM: She's got strong legs. (Laughter)

JACK: Why else?

JIM: She seems detached from any real world --

JACK: That's right!

PAUL: You can't picture a ballerina as a mother.

JACK: Fine! You certainly can't picture a ballerina as a mother. She is an artist, and as an artist she's remote. But what do all these associations have to do with Nancy?

ELAINE: I can't help it. I see Nancy Clutter and I don't think she's too much ... I mean, sure someone can be really nice, but just because they're really nice doesn't mean they're too nice.

JACK: But the point is that "ballerina's tutu" suddenly elevates Nancy Clutter's desire for charm, beauty, grace, light feminine colors -- suddenly shoots all this way up, a million miles from a young girl in Holcomb, Kansas. Suddenly the reader begins to see a ballerina pirouetting, posing, striding, leaping, etc., because "tutu" cannot be dissociated from danceer. The metaphor of "ballerina's tutu" suggests a consciousness and an intelligence coming in from the outside with a sudden need to seize upon the materials of Nancy's room, to impose on them a kind of heightened filmy sophistication. I don't think it's appropriate. I don't think it does justice to Nancy Clutter. I think it's an intrusion, a heightening or an extension or perversion or weakening of the kind of figure of speech that Kim was talking about in "Children on their Birthdays...."

Some other random comments: Paul Raymore is bothered that Capote is able to go so deeply into childhood world; Cynthia Ropes asks if Capote is sensitive to "people as they are;" Kim believes strongly in Capote's art. This was a stormy session in which the class did begin to see the difference between valid art and mere artificiality. Jack said he thought the ballerina figure was an example of style eliminating voice. He said that he thought Capote's writing voice (largely missing from In Cold Blood) generally kept his fictional style from becoming merely precious.

A few of the students' logs about this class were interesting:

The meeting began on a vague note. The thing that constantly amazes me is that something is introduced without explanation and we are expected to enthusiastically give our opinions and reactions. Anyway, we eventually grasped the idea of the voice on the tape and transcript and began making suggestions for improvement. As I reflect upon my reactions, I can see that they were a bit harsh, for the tape was a unique experiment and certainly brought me to the realization that oral voice can express emotion more readily and that writing requires much detail to generate emotion.

Perhaps this was an introduction to the next topic -- Truman Capote's voice on tape. We were all quite amazed over the "female" qualities of his voice. A large part of our meeting was devoted to discussion of his inflections on certain words and the meaning of his story on tape. Toward the end of the meeting we attempted to compare the girl in the fictional story with Nancy Clutter of In Cold Blood.

At the very end Mr. Hawkes gave a rhetorical speech in which he expressed his dissatisfaction with one of Capote's similies. Much as we thought it uproarious, he made a very good point -- a simile which is too elevated may destroy the "humanness" of a character.

This meeting was quite satisfactory and may even border on being good if we had moved at a faster pace.

--Douglas Tom
(Log of November 7)

Jim's parachute story, Capote's voice, In Cold Blood

....Help! After lunch and weekend, I get so tired and sleepy I can't appreciate the class. Today I tried to participate. Generally unsuccessful. My opinions (or those expressed by anyone in the group) only seem valid if they concur with John Hawkes'. We need some techniques to recognize and analyze voice -- obviously our personal reactions are not tres perceptive. Is there any way to deepen, sharpen or what ever one does to sensitivity? Hope so, because I want to.

--Cynthia Ropes
(Log of November 7)

Further discussion of Capote- played my tape (agreed on woman's voice). Some students say voice ruined both Cold Blood and Children on Their Birthdays. Discussion of dialog in Children especially good. For me world of Children was completely acceptable.

Tried to relate Capote's methods of description in both works- personally Nancy's room like "tu-tu" meant little to me; simply threw it away as poor. After class discussion am ready to pounce on Capote and make him rewrite it. Discussion revealed it (phrase) to be even worse than I thought.

Also played tape of my parachuting paper. Lack of class reaction- didn't really know what to say; must be herded by Mr. Hawkes. Personally I always thought that tape captured far more of feeling than paper and class seemed to support.

Still feel Nancy too good to be true- my joke of Nancy combination of Virgin Mary and Betty Crocker seems very applicable to me. Nancy just too "Christian" and too proficient to be true.

--Jim Wright
(Log of November 7)

Concerning Jim's tape and story:

Noticed that when I read silently I often hear my own voice. The urgency of Jim's "Where were they?" as heard on the tape hadn't occurred to me as I first read the story silently. Led me to thinking again about importance of emphasizing oral reading in primary education- a farfetched, as yet unsupported idea that perhaps children who are encouraged to use variety and expression in voice at an early age may be less bored with the sounds of their own voices later in reading- perhaps would be even more sensitive to the literary voice.

Truman Capote

By the end of the discussion session I was very tired but stimulated enough by the material to continue for another hour. The discussion was enlightening but sometimes the class seems almost too large to achieve the unity and communication possible in our smaller groups.

The discussion on "Children on their Birthdays" tied together many thoughts that before had no place- I intend to read Other Voices, Other Rooms. The relationships between the strange, eccentric dream birthday atmosphere of his short story and that of his "novel" explained almost perfectly details that before seemed inconsistent- the use of "frothy as a ballerina's tutu" to describe the room of Nancy Clutter, a girl who could only by wishful thinking be part of Capote's bizarre, innocent world, his preoccupation with Perry whose sunken treasure fantasies and dreams of the yellow bird made him a likely member of this other world, Capote's obvious dislike of Dick, who had few poetic tendencies, and even explained the donor of the criminals' headstones.

I no longer have such an overwhelming respect for Truman Capote, for he must have colored much of the story for purposes of airing his own dreams. This seems unfair to the Clutters, real, complex human beings who are now immortalized as rather one-dimensional characters in a best-seller of which Holcomb is now undoubtedly proud. I still wonder why Capote wrote the book, unless somewhere in the beginning he saw this crime as a good example of the inevitable murder or destruction of innocence, an eccentric innocence, as seen in "Children on their Birthdays." And now, considering that passage concerning Perry's account of Nancy's silver dollar -- I wonder how much of that was Perry. And if it was all his, then that might explain Capote's great fondness for the man. Had it not been for his close contact with the murderers, Capote probably would have been very bored with this book. I pondered, in my essay on this book, Capote's feelings the day of the double execution. Perhaps his feelings had little to do with justice, or a great interest in the background of a crime. As Perry ascended the gallows, he may have felt grief for another inevitable death of innocence, another six o'clock bus.

--Kim Dunster
(Log of November 7)

November 14

Full meeting on In Cold Blood. We had asked students to form small groups or teams to work on various projects or topics, the first of which was "voices of important people in the book." This was a difficult subject and the students were rather ill-prepared, talking in generalities about Dick and Perry without giving specific examples of these voices. In all fairness, though, we hadn't prepared them enough in advance for this job. But there were a few good moments:

ZEESE: I was interested in Elaine's comment that Perry's attempt to speak with big words and to appear to be an educated person was "too much." In what way?

ELAINE: Well, too much for his character. I mean, to be a criminal, just the kind of person he was. He was maybe more intelligent that some, and yet it just didn't seem to fit -- like an attempt to be something he wasn't.

DOUG: So what are you saying? Are you saying that Capote wasn't accurate?

ELAINE: No, I'm saying it could very well be that Perry was like that, but that Perry's different ideas of himself didn't fit Perry. I mean, it's like an adult deciding to talk baby-talk. It's just not congruent. Anyway, I was looking at Dick mostly, and my whole impression of him was of a lot of things and not one person at all. He seemed to have a kind of split personality. He passed bad checks, he assisted in the murder, he loved his parents and had a kind of love for his wife, he always knew what he was doing and yet kept having to say he was normal when he must have thought he was abnormal. But he didn't have just one sort of voice. He wasn't one strong character.

ZEESE: Well, again, Elaine, I want to ask you -- do you think that this inconsistency of voice is the fact that we're dealing with a person who's enormously complex, so that, were we to know him in life, we wouldn't find any consistency in his voice, or is it a failure on the part of the author to find the consistent voice beneath these various facets of his personality?

ELAINE: Well, I guess it could be both, and I don't really know which it would be, because I don't know if there is one consistent voice -- down below. What do you think?

ZEESE: I don't know. I think that Capote failed with him. I really do. I think that he was the harder of the two characters to write about. He seems to be -- as people were saying the other day, over and over again -- simply a little punk.

JACK: We seem to insist on dismissing Hickock as a punk. But don't we expect a "punk" to use a special language, a lot of slang? The only slang expression I remember Hickock using is "baby" -- and every time he used the word I didn't believe him. Perhaps we don't know enough about "punks" or what the word means. Perhaps "punk" is a dangerous generalization....

Cindy Fry read parts of a very sharp review in Esquire which attacked "truth" of Capote's evidence, his use of that evidence. Cindy was the only student who really did anything with her materials today. "Why does Capote pretent that his book is true from beginning to end?" she asks. "So be aware of his duplicity!" Wilner, though, pointed out that we must question authenticity of Esquire writer's sources with the same methods the Esquire writer himself used on Capote. Jack amplified problem of truth of book after we heard two rather listless presentations of negative reviews:

JACK: I'm not sure we should be talking about factual distortion. After all, it's at least possible that factual errors needn't result in serious distortion. But real bias -- the expression of a somehow destructive attitude or the failure to express sympathy when we might expect to find it -- this sort of thing we'd find in the writing, in the language itself. The presence or absence of the writer may result in as great a distortion as the accidental -- or even deliberate -- misconstruing of facts.

DOUG: What about the interview with the lady --

JACK: The closest we come to the idea of willful distortion of factual evidence is that two reporters claimed that the final words of one of the murderers were such and such, and one of the reporters wasn't actually on the scene. Perhaps Capote was wrong. But these bits of factual evidence just seem to get in our way. I hardly think they indicate any kind of "willful distortion."

HELENE: Well, if it's not willful distortion then it's sloppy reporting.

JACK: But even a signed confession isn't necessarily absolute fact. At any rate, the really important thing is that even Perry Smith's two "voices" -- his tough brutal voice and his poetic voice -- may owe at least something to Capote's own fictional style. And what about fictional devices such as the "echo" of Nancy's teddy bear? To me these are extremely serious failings --

Francie Chew then read aloud portions of Rebecca West's homage to In Cold Blood and Capote without really showing us why Rebecca West thought the book was good or challenging her judgment. At one point Francie did say that it was easier to write about evil people than good people, which returned us violently to the group's distaste for the Clutters and Capote's apparent lack of feeling for the family. So far our team projects on this book sound good but produce only uneven discussion. Maybe that problem is that here we and not the students invented the projects.

At the end of the period, amidst much groaning from the students, we handed around a dittoed sheet containing a short paragraph which Jack and I had tried to make "voiceless." The original passage was Elaine Smith's response to the extraordinary/commonplace exercise and announced the birth of a baby with the detached casual interest of a young child. In trying to understate (or make commonplace) the "extraordinary" fact of birth, Elaine made nice use of speech rhythms that were real:

> My sister had a baby a couple days ago. Seven pounds three ounces, and it looks like a shriveled up Indian (a very small Indian). She'll be home from the hospital tomorrow.
>
> --Elaine Smith

> My sister had a baby two days ago. It weighed seven pounds and three ounces. It was bald and looked like a wizened Indian. She will be home from the hospital tomorrow.
>
> --("Voiceless" version)

As soon as we explained to the class that we had destroyed the rhythms in an original paragraph by Elaine, and had drastically obscured or changed the speaker in her passage, and that the idea now was to restore those rhythms and suggest a definite speaker, the group began to come alive and get down to work again. After about ten minutes of in-class writing, we used the opaque projector, so that we could read along while some members of the class read aloud their restored versions:

> When I visited my sister Alice in the hospital, she proudly announced that her new baby had weighed seven pounds and three ounces. When she held that tiny bald thing that looked like a wizened Indian, she was beautiful. She seemed complete for the first time in her life. I've wanted her to be happy for a long time.
>
> --Cynthia Ropes

> Two days ago my brother-in-law called, beaming over the phone. My sister had just had a baby. We saw it through the hospital glass and cooed -- mostly for Tom's benefit, as the infant was in no way distinguishable from the others flanking it in identical cribs. The baby resembled more closely a bald and wizened Indian than the pink vision we had held in mind. Tom declared it to be seven pounds and three ounces -- we assured him that this was most meritable.
>
> --Kim Dunster

> Two days ago my sister had a baby that weighed seven pounds and three ounces. When I looked in the basket the top of its head looked like a flat peach half. My sister comes home tomorrow and all the guys will come over to look at it. Yesterday Ricky said it looked like an old dried-up prune with purple ears.
>
> --Jim Wright

> Two days ago my sister -- my own sister -- had a baby. I've seen it, so I ought to know. A real baby they even weighed on the scale -- seven pounds, three ounces -- so now we've got this baby in the family, though it looks more like a mummy than my sister. But she's coming home from the hospital tomorrow -- and I guess she'll bring the baby too.
>
> --Jack Hawkes

(1) Sister had her baby couple days ago. Seven pound, three ounce. Bald. Looked like a Indian. Oughta be home from the hospital tomorrow.
(2) She had the baby two days ago. It weighed seven pounds and three ounces and it was just so bald -- It looked like a little old Indian. Well, I told her she ought to stay as long as she liked up to the hospital, but she said, "No...."

--Zeese Papanikolas

I had different students try to guess by their readings, the two voices I was trying to suggest -- one, a backwood's yokel type, the other a doting old aunt. This was pretty interesting and some of the students came quite close. I was surprised at the acuity of the class concerning the subtlest problems of diction and speech rhythms here. Why can't they approach a book in this manner and with this same enthusiasm and intelligence? This was one of the best experiments so far -- both in student response and for its possibilities as far as voice. We should have done it at the start of the quarter.

November 23

Meeting with four students. This time we wanted to find another way into Old Man and decided to work with the single line of dialogue appearing early in the story when one of the convicts reads aloud a newspaper headline saying the flood danger's past and the levee will hold: "I reckon that means it'll bust tonight." The idea was for each of us to consider the sentence out of context (so that it became practically meaningless) and then invent a speaker whose intonations would "say" something not evident in the words themselves. We then went around the table, each person speaking the sentence twice (and recording it), while the rest of us wrote 1) a descriptive statement about the speaker, or about the qualities of his voice, and 2) a "translation" of his attitude into a new sentence. The readings: Roger Wilner: sullen, heavily ironic; Jim Kilgore: excited, inquisitive, expectant; Cindy Fry: a country woman, resigned, intuitive, fatalistic; Jack: gleeful, full of joy at impending destruction. I read the line as a statement of fact, soft and flat. After each reading we read aloud our descriptions and "translations," defended them, compared them, played back the readings as necessary. The responses showed pretty remarkable agreement:

CYNTHIA FRY'S NOTES:

Roger: cynical, disgusted (doesn't want it to bust tonight), pensive (thinking of the consequences of this fact), this sounds like it's a serious matter to him. "This'll be tough -- gonna cause real problems."

Jim: light, something unimportant, carefree, trivial, almost like "it" is funny, flippant.
"Great -- should be fun, whole town's gonna be there."

Cynthia: thinking about something, yet rather non-involved with it, not really that interested or involved with what's going to happen, lethargic, non-emotional, middle-aged, harsh, grave.

Jack: old, crackly man, loves to talk, long-winded story-teller, a real character, talk of the town, extrovert, eccentric, very amused at the fact that it's going to bust tonight (anticipates it), evil.
"Guess it's gonna bust tonight fellas -- d'I ever tell y'about the time...."

Zeese: watching something that just happened and talking to someone next to him (as he watched something in the distance), removed from the situation (it won't affect him).
"Hmmmmm -- guess it's finally gonna happen -- might as well go inside now -- dinner on?"

JIM KILGORE'S NOTES:

Roger: serious, emphasis on "bust," understanding -- some meaning and thought to what is said, no doubt real -- sure of what he is saying, confident about something not looked forward to -- regrets, concerned.

Jim: matter of fact, no tone of real understanding, everyday conversation-type, no regrets, not really concerned. "I think it is and hope so." "I can't wait to see the water rushing in."

Cynthia: serious, great amount of regret, something that has a great effect on the speaker, understanding. "Well, we'll have to bear it."

Jack: drunk, fiendish happiness, expressed, cynical, self-satisfaction, no regret, gliding, gleeful, could be

1) someone deeply depressed yet striving toward cynicism
2) or one happy that his plans or his thoughts had succeeded
3) or someone who is drunk.

"Tomorrow we'll see the bodies float by."

Zeese: used to get along, sadness, unduly detached, grin and bear it, rasping voice, everyday type of approach, matter of fact, not strong or deep emotion, a statement -- talking to someone on the phone, reading from a passage you know nothing of. "We'll have to go see it."

ROGER WILNER'S NOTES:

Rog: It was an attempt to put forth an opposing, cynical prediction, but the voice as it came out was too clipped and empty, not strong or folksy enough.

Jim: lickety-split, with a matter of fact lilt behind the quietly-spoken words.

Cindy: This was a tired, resigned voice -- "It's gonna bust, and there's nothin' we can do about it."

Jack: a half-conscious laughing drunk, alert enough to be aware of the conversation, but reaching only for humor and not conversational participation. -- "Lesh have another drink."

Zeese: This was a soft voice, softer than the first with less emphasis on bust; it, too, wasn't enough to contradict the paper effectively. -- "Yes, that's what they say, but it won't."

--Roger Wilner

JACK'S NOTES:

Roger: somber, dejected, heavy country voice -- the dying "tonight" suggests absolute futility, helplessness, despair, a kind of typical criminal, giving up; speaking to someone he takes for granted, or to himself -- "It will, no matter what. I know."

Jim: fast happy statement (equal pitch and emphasis except on "bust") suggests gleeful anticipation of child -- talking to someone who cares about what he says. -- "I think it is going to, and hope so" --

Cynthia: country woman's sardonic acceptance of fact -- mildly detached, mildly weary -- "It will bust and we'll just have to grin and bear it" plus "I knew it all the while."

Jack: choked up joking -- country man's gleeful statement of fact -- thigh slapping -- emphasis on bust but using pitch on tonight -- "The cat's gonna be outa the bag tonight -- and I can't wait!" or "Boys, that (?)'s gonna suffer tonight for sure, but hot damn, I'm glad!" Exclamation.

Zeese: monotone, even pitched and mildly clipped -- mere acceptance of fact, mildly mundane, mildly neutral.

--Jack

ZEESE'S NOTES:

Roger: accent on "bust." Sullen, angry, heavily cynical -- a tired, heavy joyless sort of cynicism, unable, brutalized; says what he expects is required of him and of his people. -- "Yah, it'll bust tonight just as long as the papers says it won't. It will. Always happens.

Jim: Asking a question. A young boy seeking approval, excited. Maybe a little afraid. "Is it gonna bust tonight for sure?"

Cindy: Falling accent on bust -- drawn out, a tired sort of approval that it will "bust," fatal acceptance. Relief that the worst will be fulfilled. "Well, I seen it comin'. It'll bust tonight, you watch."

Jack: Delight in destruction, visions of chaos and joy! "Can't wait to get down there, see that son-of-a-bitch go bust!"

Zeese: quiet, flat, statement of fact, acceptance. -- Country humor, the speaker is playing the simpleton, innocent; at the same time he knows and expects audience to see through his pose. An ironist.

The "translations" from Jim and Cindy were especially good. My statement of my own reading led us into discussion of how the line should be read in context. I was thinking of the tall convict as saying the line; we touched on his humility and knowledge. Jack read it as country humor. We then got into a discussion of some topics of the book: Carlos: "prisoners build a shell around themselves." -- (commenting on disbelief of newspaper story which prompts the line we worked with); me: "but the prisoner was right, as Jack said: the levee did burst." Cindy: "Prison is escape from life." Jim: "The prisoner has to focus on a task in order to still his suffering." Wilner: "Why didn't he escape? He knew only prison life and that stupid boat." Me (exasperated): "OK, I'll give you three choices: convict is either a comic character, a heroic character, or a tragic character." Wilner: "He's comic." Cindy: "He's tragic." She then proceeded to talk about absurdity of life, of justice in book, the convict creating values in order to survive." I asked if convict's values were as arbitrary as she implied. Jim saw "valor" as convict's motive for holdup. I pointed out structure of book as "valorous" act of holdup with woman as witness; valor on boat with woman as witness. Next week Jim will talk about "valor" of holdup and compare it with second act of valor.

November 28

Big meeting. Faulkner's Old Man. Jack began by summarizing questions and themes which had been touched upon or brought up in small meetings of last week: the "primitive," timeless quality of the river, the "knowledge" and intuition of the woman, the convict and woman as insensitive "things," the convict's "blindness and stupidity." We played back the taped readings of the "I reckon that means it'll bust tonight" line of Nov. 23 meeting (I'd changed my reading to bring out country humor) and recreated the experiment, with students writing descriptions of the voices ~~and~~ "translations" of the sentence as the voice rendered it. In general this was not as successful as it was on the 23rd -- I think this had to do with the size of the class and the fact that we couldn't spend as much time on the individual readings as before. But we did get some sensitive interpretations from some of the students, and the discussion was lively. The question: "Which of these readings is closest to how the tall convict would render the line," didn't bring out the "right" response or lead us into the story. We quickly went into the reports on Old Man. Chuck, a rather listless reiteration of Jack's and my argument about the Dr. on the 23rd; Douglas, a fairly shallow reading of the women in the book (he did bring out the fact that the women are always either burdens or betrayers); Kim, an excellent and excited application of Joseph Campbell's Hero with a Thousand Faces to the book -- outlined the mythical content of the work: the epic journey, the impossible tasks, the quest, woman as savior/destroyer, the precious object to be brought back. Jim Kilgore, of his own accord, began to talk about valor in the book as it related to what Kim had just said. We listened to Faulkner's own voice and made brief comments upon it.

So the reports were in general disappointing -- better than the work on In Cold Blood, however, and Jack was able to "take off" from them, fill them out, and say something about the story. He spoke of myth and the subconscious, the convict as hero and savior. Question: "But the convict doesn't know he's a hero. He goes back to the prison." Cynthia Ropes replies, "But we know he is," and Jack amplifies on the paradox of the unreality of the prison compared to the reality of the dream-river for the convict: only in the imagination, in dream, is heroism possible. It is possible as story for us, not for the convict himself as actor in his own drama. This was a good day, generally very lively, with many concrete things said about the book. For the first time, I think, Jack's and my response really came out of and was generated by what the students said, was not in entire contradiction to their statements. The next step is for them to fill out their arguments and ideas.

After a short break we passed out dittoed copies of David Lam's poem of the 17th, "Ode to a Ping Pong Ball" without title:

> My heart soars when I behold
> Your articulate movements.
> Like a glowing asterisk
> And a purposeful comet,
> Without hesitation, without mercy, yet without haste.
> Plink-plock...plink-plock...plink-plock
> Darting,
> Spinning,
> Connecting,
> Arching,
> Projecting....
> Until at last you beguile some poor dejected soul.
> --David Lam

and had the students who remained for the experiment write a prose "revision" of the poem attempting to illustrate its meaning via concrete detail. This was according to the suggestion of the group of the 22nd, some of whom thought that the poem was, except for the title, sexually suggestive. We used the opaque projector to see the results of the prose revisions, which were both scarce and poor:

> The clock on the wall, like an alarm clock set for 5:30 a.m., threatening to sound. Apprehensively I look at the long hand, the short hand, whirling slowly but faster because time is becoming itself.
>
> Each movement is a segment of time. Were I stillborn, time would not exist. But my heartbeat is time, every breath is time, and the clock is time. Time, time, time ....
>
> Why are you fading? The clock is on the wall behind as I open the door to leave. Down the hall, I cannot hear the alarm.
>
> reluctantly,
> Douglas Tom

> A black, ugly little bug with lots of little legs -- its looks make me sick. What it does is even worse. It traps other little bugs in its gossamer, killing and eating them afterwards. The whole scene is revolting.
>
> --Dale Rettig

> With lust filled eyes, the G.I. watched the night-hall girl spring, wheeling and bending over in a twisted almost inviting form. She was dressed in a tight two-piece which sparkled and glimmered as she strained and twisted about to the loud slow resonating sounds of a wood-stick drum. The G.I. twitched tensely in his seat as he stared up at the dancing girl.
>
> --Jim Kilgore

We thought that Douglas Tom's piece was in fact interesting. And Jim Kilgore's piece gave us a few really useful moments of talk about shifting voices ("lust-filled," "almost inviting," "tight two-piece," etc.) and embarrassment. But the experiment was too gimicky and difficult (at least two students couldn't write anything) and pretty much of a flop. David's revision of the poem, done over the week-end, was, however, a big improvement -- an improvement prompted, thought Jack, by the class's silly response to his first revision. We briefly tried to bring out the merits of the revision to the class -- the suppleness of the language, shifting smoothly from a lofty diction to student slang; the consistency of voice; the irony which was working for the first time in this piece. (David has inadvertently and/or clumsily used ironic materials in most of his work so far.)

January 9, 1967 -- New Quarter

Big meeting. Discussion of mechanical matters, reading for next three weeks (Flannery O'Conner "The Life You Save," Faulkner "Spotted Horses") and a few things we will read later on. We will do longer papers this quarter, four 6-pages due at two week intervals; made first assignment; a non-fiction paper on any subject or on one aspect of mass media. One half of the class will turn this in next Monday, the other half two weeks from Monday. This staggered system will operate throughout the quarter.

We passed out partial transcript of a tape a student in Clive Miller's section made of John Wakabayaski, a seven-year-old, talking about his various vacations.* We told the class nothing about John except that he was a student in a Palo Alto school, and that this was a transcript of an interview with him:

JOHN: Our next vacation starts. It's a very big adventure. It's where I get carried three miles.

BOB: You get carried three miles?

JOHN: On the gigantic slopes of Lassen. Now this is how it came out. We started out at six o'clock. We went on route one-oh -- no, no, we went on route 80 -- no, we started out so early, we started out at -- oh, it was, I guess it was noon, about three o'clock -- and we started out into country that looked like scorched -- like it was burnt by a fire, and we went past hills that looked like this: one side was black and the other side -- it was so even -- one side was black and the other side was brown. And then we reached a scorching valley that made me and my father complain about how hot it was. I couldn't stand it and neither could my father. And that's why we took a stupid route back, after we had stayed at Lassen.

BOB: But you were leaving now?

JOHN: Yeah, and then we went up to Red Bluff, and that's the place that's hot -- you hear of it a lot in the weather report, Red Bluff 107 degrees. That's the place that's hot all the time.

BOB: And you went there?

JOHN: No, we went there and kept on going on -- we turned on 36, and then turned on this other one, and we ended up in Manzanita Lodge, and that was the nicest place in -- at the edge of Lassen National Park. And you know when you're far away, it looks like you're only one foot away from Lassen, but you're twenty miles of road winding and all that stuff. So we stayed at this lodge -- it was eleven o'clock; that's really late. And my poor little brother was all worn out -- he was sleeping. He likes to fall asleep, but from now on when we go on trips that are fifty miles long he just dozes off in our station wagon; he loves to sleep. But I'm going to tell you the rest of the story....

---

*See Robert Weston's logs for November 21 and 29 for a description of another teacher's use of these materials, pp. 135-142. Also, see Charlotte Morse's log (Section 55) of February 9 for classes based on additional tapes of children, pp. 154-157.

They read the transcript and then gave their impressions of John and his voice. These impressions Jack wrote down on the blackboard. Jack noticed that they in general divided into two classes -- positive and negative. Some of them were:

Positive	Negative
animated	insecure
enthusiastic	not observant
concerned with details	trying to prove himself
pretty smart	wants to seem superior
	adult mannerisms
	not very worldly
	adolescent, mildly insecure
Age: 11; 14; 10	disadvantaged, probably colored
	trying to impress
	thinks faster than he talks
	jerky

We discussed these responses (most of the "negative" ones came from the confusion and slips in the transcripts, the broken sentences) and then listened to a portion of the interview on tape not covered by the transcript:

JOHN: And there's a slide -- of this, of me and my little brother in this big tree. And so--
BOB: Did you climb a tree?
JOHN: Climb it? I only got up five feet.
BOB: Oh...good.
JOHN: My limit now is ten feet 'cause at ten feet I am as scared as a man who's about to fall from nine trillion feet above the ground right onto concrete -- solid concrete. I'm not that afraid of height anymore 'cause I practiced when I was six and stayed up there for one hour -- one whole hour -- to get used to it. 'Cause I was as high as the -- I was higher than the part of the roof of my house. When you're at ten feet it's scarey -- it's just scarey. A man can't climb up that high on the crabapple tree. It---it just isn't right 'cause the branches would break and the man would get hurt. 'Course he might be able to climb up five or six feet. My father doesn't trust branches, that's why, but I do. I step on them -- no matter what -- I step on them.

This the students enjoyed immensely, and most claimed to hear a quite different voice than the one they'd described from the transcript, although a few felt their first notions still held up. A further assignment, due next Thursday, is a paragraph starting from the transcript as a basis in the first person and attempting to render the voice of John Wakabayashi as they heard it on tape.

We discussed briefly what the tape supplied which the transcript couldn't convey: speed of John's voice, his emphasis on certain words, his rhythms, his egotism, his delight in the sounds of words (the way he draws certain words out).

January 16

Fine meeting of twenty and Father Walter Ong and Jerome Bruner. We passed out transcripts of the John Wakabayashi tape, plus a list of the descriptive adjectives which the class had used to characterize John's voice as they "heard" it in the transcript alone last week. (See January 9.) Jack talked briefly about the general negative-ness of these adjectives and then the students reversed their opinions, having now heard the tape. Age was a prime consideration here -- the class now realizes he's much younger than they thought, and so the qualities of insecurity, "condescension," and wanting to prove himself, wanting to seem superior became mostly excitement and youthful desire to tell a story, or, as Roger Wilner aptly put it, to show something, "a new dump truck," Bruner and Ong talked about inadequacy of transcript to capture voice, and Douglas Tom asked whether you could ever capture a particular voice in writing -- I mentioned the notion of dialogue in a short story as a code, an artificial device to suggest real speech.

We then read dittoed copies of pieces by Kathy and Kim rather closely, and talked about why these were good renderings of John W's voice.

> Show me your turtle.
> Mine's bigger.
> I found mine way far under the water way down one side of the hill behind the forest. Yours just comes from the pond in your backyard. Mine's bigger; it swims. My turtle is a real wild turtle. Yours is domestic. Look at your turtle, it's gray. Mine's pretty green.
> Come on. We'll find you a better turtle.
> I know where.
>
> --Kathy Arbuckle

> Now I was only a little scared let me tell you. There was nearer eighty-six thousand snakes coming crawling all around hissing with poison in their mouth. And this man he puts a huge rattler over a milk bottle -- we stood the whole time outside the fence with hardly any room for me to see over so my father - yes, my father sits me like this on his shoulders very very high up and hsss! out comes a bit of yellowish poison. Now my mother she wanted to leave -- the snakes made her frightened, that

is for sure, they were all black and forty-two feet long -- bigger than this whole table.

--Kim Dunster

We got at the very close relationship between narrator and reader, and Ong and Bruner discussed the effect of the weak article "the" in implying complicity between reader and writer -- I mentioned John's use of definite pronouns "you" in this connection. Jack and Bruner and Ong talked about mythological implications in John's story which three of the student writers had picked up: Kathy touching on it in use of turtles, Kim with poisonous snakes, and Jim Wright in its apotheosis as dragon. Father Ong called John W's vision of himself Olympian, and he talked of formulaic language -- John W's "waving certain words or expressions (the 'adult' ones) like flags." Bruner told of an Eskimo story teller film in this connection -- an old man telling _lies_, a boy humming while he does so, the old man in reaction exaggerating his story still further into a kind of epic style. We ended hour by listening, with great pleasure, to the portion of John W. tape covered by transcript

January 26

Class of five. Worked with George MacBeth's "A Child's Garden":*

Who was here. Before his cat
Washed and rose. Without his shoes
Who inched outside while someone's hat
Made a noise. Light feet helped. Who's.

Those are these eggs? Ladybird's.
Hard like crumbs of sleep. She flies
Off to help who find some words
For sounds and things. Who's two puffed eyes

Tug at flowers now for bees
Tucked away. Some try to hide
In pouting fox-gloves' jugs. Who sees
Their fat bear's thighs, though, wedged inside

Scouring honey. Look! Rare stones
In lupin leaves. Who's flapping gown
Shakes them all out. Ow! Who's bones
Aren't awake, make who fall down

---

*George MacBeth, "A Child's Garden," _Penguin Modern Poets 6_ (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1964), pp. 112-13. Copyright permission by George MacBeth.

Biting earth. Who hears a sound.
Whose are these wet softish hairs
Brushing someone's mouth? Can bound
As quick as you. Whoosh! Peter scares

A thin bird. Zip! Squawk! Its beak
Almost nipped who's fattest worm
Head and tail. Who hears him squeak
Through the grass: who sees him squirm

Down a hole. Who wants to kiss
His frightened worm. Who's coolish knees
Push him up to clematis
He thinks it's called. It makes him sneeze.

Gooseflesh comes. Who's bare toes rake
Up oily slugs. Who wants to hop,
Skip. Who's flopping tassels make
Ants run. Who hears his crispies pop.

Students read the poem and wrote in-class responses. All of them attempted either to explicate or recreate the poem, Carlos and Greg writing predictable pieces on child's interest in nature, etc. Francie wrote a recreation which verged on the precious, and Dale a quite interesting thing about a child-gardener "crushing bugs" with the hand tools. We talked about the pieces in relation to the poem:

> A child's world is one of sights and sounds, new experiences and strange things. He has time to notice these things that are puzzling, and intriguing to him. He sees the worm narrowly escape the bird's sudden attack. This child is interested because the sight is something new and exciting to him. He isn't all tied up in a world of worries or troubles. He can go out and feel the grass, touch the worms and study the bees. His life is full of new experiences. He enjoys it. His awareness of nature is coming alive. He's beginning to know that it's good to be alive.
>
> --Greg Psaltis

> The poet attempts to recreate the exciting experience that a child goes through while in contact with nature. The main element of the poem is excitement.
>
> Unlike a grown up's conception of excitement, a child's excitement is found in everyday, commonplace events and things.
>
> Such natural occurrences, such as watching a bird attempting to take a worm, is heightened to an enormous degree, and leaves the child impressed.
>
> The entire atmosphere of the poem is one of warmth and excitement.
>
> --Carlos Ryerson

> Out in the rain. It's coming down-wet and it hits my nose and bounces off. It splats on the mud and I can walk through it. I can't

> get my feet wet because I have my boots on. They've got fur inside and the mud puddles can't come in. Watch the rain come down in the puddles. It makes little circles that get bigger and when they get big they disappear. All gone. And there's a dragonfly buzzing around in the rain. Is he getting all wet? Does he have boots and a raincoat that won't let the rain in? Is he buzzing around because he likes the rain like I do?
>
> --Francie Chew

> Who is who. Is it fingers grasping tightly around black, moist dirt? Is it fingers carefully feeling a flower, gently pulling petals?
>
> Who is picking up a stone to see what's underneath -- flat ground with a couple holes round with a glistening filling.
>
> Curious about the small hand tools, digging and scraping with them, occasionally smashing an insect.
>
> Who is looking down the rows of neatly arranged vegetable rows, with a white stick at the end of each covered by an empty seed package.
>
> --Dale Rettig

Jack pointed out that both Carlos and Greg had mixed borrowed "literary" voice and colloquial voice in their passages, and challenged the honesty of both these pieces. We talked about the near-preciousness and coziness (my word) of Francie's, though we all agreed that the dangers in Francie's piece derived from the poem itself, and that her passage (along with Dale's) was in fact close to the poem. By talking about the pieces and trying to relate them to the poem, we began to approach the poem's meaning. Elaine said the garden had a quality of oldness to it -- "old, because children had done this before." Jim who, with Carlos and Greg, began by feeling the child was merely curious about nature (no real tension or reason behind child's garden search) suddenly pointed out that the child was sneaking out.

Next we did a series of readings of the poem, the idea being to approach the poem through criticizing these readings: Francie's reading was "happy" and far from the poem, as she herself admitted. Dale's and Jim's rather flat. We listened to MacBeth read another poem -- "The Owl" -- which had much the same vision of nature. Then Dale and Jim read again. On second readings Dale got quite close to the tension and (the class's word) "awe" in the poem. There was something "sinister" about the poem, said Elaine, and found the word she'd been looking for all afternoon. We listened to MacBeth read "Child's Garden," and Jack then helped class to the idea of the pagan, cruel, yet innocent world of the poem, and, in slightly different terms than yesterday, we proceeded to develop these ideas. Today Jack talked about the poignancy of "Who" as a name and a question; I said it was also a defiant question: guess who I am, adult. The process of comparative readings is something concrete, and the class did more of the work today than yesterday. There was less "pulling" today on our part, less resistance on theirs. But still I am disturbed by how slow and tedious this process is, and I wonder whether the fact that Jack and I had heard MacBeth read the poem before class meant that we were herding class too much to MacBeth's reading, rather than to a reading justified entirely by an understanding of the poem? We should try this method 1) with a poem for which there is no author's reading available, 2) for a poem the author's reading of which Jack and I will only hear when the class does -- after some preliminary readings of our own.

February 6

Meeting of seven with John Knoepfle, John Felstiner, and Carolyn Fitchett guests. We worked with Kim Dunster's poem about Dr. Countryman:

> And this cried Dr. Countryman, revered doctor of theology
> over the vicious humming of the projector,
> And this is myself and Mrs. Countryman standing before
> the gates of that magnificent Holy City
> where our Beloved Saviour Himself
> a fourth-grader in the back row coughed.
>
> And here he cried pushing his glasses up further onto his
> short broad nose is where I partook of an experience far
> richer and finer than ever before yes
> the very rock upon which Our Lord prayed in that Garden
> see surrounded by a fence in this little shrine
> I explained my position to the guard who then let me
> actually on it can you imagine the very rock and I
> knelt there overcome by His love can't you see
> where Christ prayed for goodwill and peace and inner
> light don't you see the very rock the very same place.
>
> And here again outside the shrine in the light of God's good sun
> so much inner contentment and tranquillity I could
> feel God in me and I have returned with this
> feeling to share with you the goodness of Man
> and outside the Shrine little hollow-eyed, pot-bellied Arab Children,
> brushing the flies from their naked faces.
>
> --Kim Dunster

Readings were done by Jack, Douglas, Paul, John Knoepfle, Carolyn Fitchett. We saw quickly the irony of the phrase "revered Doctor of theology;" the question was to define it. John K's reading gave a more sympathetic picture of the Dr.: satisfied, moneyed clergyman, but a sincere one. Carolyn F. read a Jonathan Edwards, fire and brimstone sermon, and these were essentially the two poles of the argument, Jack seeing a man who has power to sway masses by his rhetoric, and feeling we feared Dr. Countryman's reductive rhetoric, as well as disbelieving it. I saw him as being in a more pathetic position, however, -- trying to speak over the hum of the projector to a bored audience, and spent some time showing how the poem's audience was being put in the place of Countryman's -- the stops and gaps in the poem were the lapses of audience's attention. John K. made a good point: Countryman's position is a little shrine surrounded by a fence" -- a reference to lines 11-12. Kim talked about the real Dr. Countryman. She said she "hated him" but agreed to the partial pathos surrounding him in the poem, the best that we see in him, as well as fear him. Some class adjectives describing voice of Dr. C. Cynthia -- glib, flowing, assured, self-righteous. Paul R. -- hypocritical. Someone pointed out he was lost to his audience, "wrapped up" in his own speech.

John K. played a tall tale recorded from an Ohio River boatman, and talked briefly about it. I made one or two comparison with spotted horses. A very good day -- the class participated well -- at least without prompting. I think they are beginning to be able to read.

February 8

Meeting with nine. The plan was to work with "Hey, Bruce Hopkins," a poem by a girl in Leo's section, about a high school classmate who was a social outcast, was blind in one eye, and who finally stabbed to death a girl working for his family. (Jack had taken John Barth to Leo's class discussion of this poem and both he and Barth, along with Mark Mirsky and Clive Miller, had taped interpretive readings of the poem.)

We passed out the poem, Jack read it aloud in a monotone (what he calls his "voiceless" reading), we again focused on the speaker and, telling the students only that the poem was written by someone in another class, asked the group to "type" the person addressing Bruce Hopkins. Jim Kilgore thought that Bruce H. was himself the speaker. Paul Raymore: someone who's alone, desirable, wants

Hey, Bruce Hopkins, where are you going?
With your glass eye
And your dagger in your hand.

Bruce Hopkins, are you tired
Of life and men and women?
Are you frightened of the empty socket your world has become?
Do you scan the blurred horizon for a voice, an answer.
A reason for your senseless loneliness?
Bruce Hopkins, in the silent, ugly morning of tomorrow
You wander -- drunk, sinking, and submerged
Quicksand smucking all around you
Drawing you into a slimy trench
Of confused hatred.

Bruce Hopkins, can I reach you, can I help?
Don't kill me -- I feel for you Bruce,
With your kitchen knife in one hand
And your rotten eye.....

And now, Bruce Hopkins, lying whitely in that bed,
Chained, dazed.

Why?
Why?

why not

--Helen Williams

to help -- the ideal of womanhood. Jim Wright: a "do-gooder." Kathy Arbuckle: girl without anyone. Francie: a social worker, an "angel," certain amount of detachment and insincerity. Helene: girlfriend of alcoholic or dope addict. David Lam: older sister, mother. We exploited the "insincerity" motif in Francie's idea, and found another word for it: detachment. Helene liked the poem but heard humorous elements in it: the first lines, beginning of the third stanza, the answer to the last question. She heard a popular song in the first line: "Hey Joe, where are you going with that gun in your hand." And Francie mentioned several other songs with this same formula. But the class kept resisting the idea of considering any action behind the poem: Francie going so far as to say that "Don't kill me" was metaphoric: "Don't kill my hope," or something of that nature. So to try to move from speaker to action we decided that each of us would "make up a story about the speaker in the poem":

> She walked up the stairs, down to the end of the hall, and slowly opened the bolted door directly facing her. Once inside the door, she was drawn to the French windows covering one side of the room. She looked out and down at the great expanse of green lawn below her.
> After a while she turned to face the now unbolted door, and, standing in

the center of the room, her eyes followed the dark red wall paper and soon fell upon an old chest of drawers. Her gaze examined the chest and wondered as to what it held, but she didn't open one of its drawers for fear she would have guessed correctly.

--Kathy Arbuckle

Green grass glistened under a moist blanket of sparkling morning dew, and a lonely figure stepped out of the east. It was a girl; a girl with long, straight black hair that hung down her back and shimmered in the fresh sunlight with a life of its own. Her face was plain with a small petite nose, slightly upturned, and large moist lips....

On the grass, huddled in a small brown bundle, was a puppy. A puppy with large doleful eyes and a small black nose, cold and wet. The girl approached and as she neared the puppy it gave a squeak of recognition. The girl's face softened and her deliberate graceful walk turned into a joyful dash to where the puppy lay, cold and alone, in the grass. She took it up into her arms and it seemed at that moment, with the morning's newly risen sun as a background, that she was the picture of all the things that go into womanhood: understanding, courage, tenderness, and deep feeling for life.

--Paul Raymore

She carried her lunch in a paper bag, wore a simple thin ribbon in her hair, walked always near the wall in crowded corridors and shared a locker with a girl who stuck chewing gum on the inside of the locker door. And day after day she heard the banging of the third locker door away from hers, was aware of that boy who smashed steel against steel when the corridor was filled with noise and the smell of perspiration, was aware of the crashing sound and, within sight of that rough shoulder, was helpless, knowing all the while that she was a kind of victim who would never feel his fingers on her arm or hear him speak. One night she dreamt of him and the next day, when everyone was laughing in the corridor, he was gone and there was nothing she could do but write a poem on the fly leaf of her ancient history text book.

--Jack Hawks

At first everyone felt that Kathy's piece had very little to do with the poem, but we argued for her evocation of loneliness as starkly real, shocking, mysterious, talked about contrasting detail that creates the isolation here, the "bolted door" that suggests the door to your own past as well as confinement, some powerful guilt. We worried considerably about Paul's piece -- it's sentimentality, the incongruity between the idealized girl and the unreal and sentimentalized puppy. Here there were moments of embarrassed silence, maybe some indication that the students knew these materials and themes are important to Paul. Jack's piece brought us to the realization that the speaker in the poem was in some way Helen Williams herself and Chuck saw the lonliness of Jack's version of Helen Williams -- "walking along the sides of the crowded halls," a "thin ribbon in her hair"; but Chuck asked, "If she's totally alone, how can she help as she claims in the poem?" And George answered: "That's the reason."

Jack tried to help the group into this idea of aloneness and helplessness as a possible strength, and summarized the actions in the pieces we'd heard (to enter a forbidden room; to cuddle the dog; to walk alone in a crowded school and to dream and to write a poem). He then shifted the discussion to the problem of Bruce's action, asking what Bruce Hopkins had actually done -- but the group tended to resist the idea that he'd really done anything, so Jack concentrated on the difference between "dagger" (the speaker's naive poeticising) and "kitchen knife," which was concrete, exact, and could (in someone's words) be a thing of violence.

Here we listened to the taped readings of the poem by John Barth and Clive. I worked hard on the possibilities of "Don't kill me" as metaphoric, humorous, insincere -- and finally Francie admitted that the cry might quite literally refer to a physical death and be addressed to a killer -- a possibility she didn't like to think about. (Back to the "kitchen knife." We decided that Clive's "New York taxi-cab driver" reading was exciting, funny, terrifying, but was also imposed on the poem and might have been the result of his own embarrassment. Barth's exaggerated reading of "Don't kill me -- I feel for you Bruce...." confirmed the embarrassment idea: something terrible had happened ut the speaker (or poet) was uncertain about her feelings or how to handle them.

One last reading by the poetess herself. We listed the characteristics of her voice, and began getting nearer to the realities of the poem by hearing the seriousness of her reading. She "cares," "loves him," is "experienced--," "whispers," is "listless." Jack compared the voice to that of a person in shock. He heard "tears and grief" in the voice. Then he told the class about the circumstance behind the poem and talked about the adolescent desire to "help," and the suppression of the knowledge of what that help implied, and guilt for not having given it. A naively sincere poem he called this. I talked about the mixture of voices here as a reflection of the writer's confused feelings -- the warmth, detachment, and inadvertent humor creating incompatible voices or possibilities.

Generally I was pleased that the students are managing to conceive of a speaker in such concrete and sometimes strangely accurate terms.

February 20

Big meeting. John Felstiner visiting. We began by distributing copies of a transcript of 7-year-olds from Clive's class at DeAnza answering the question: "if you could have any pet in the world, what kind of pet would you want?" (See Section 55, Charlotte Morse's log of February 8 for original use of these materials.) The question we asked our class was whether or not this material was a transcript of actual children's speech, or whether it was an adult attempt to reproduce such speech. The students were of both opinions here -- they felt the form of the piece especially implied an adult creation: either this or a tape was edited. Some parts, the stumblings especially, were almost too exact and implied a conscious artistry. The last four lines were stereotypes. What sounded authentic to the class were the points at which the feeling was right, but ran ahead of the speech (the pet shot business), the vagueness and the poor rhyme of heart/part, the alliteration of candy/castle (Felstiner's comment), the repetition of bow down/walk down. The students compared this with the John Wakabayashi tape -- they found this transcript smooth and regular in comaprison with John W's halts and starts -- but recalled John was trying to recollect actual fact, while the people on the tape were being asked to rhapsodize. Kim saw the relationship of the mythical materials many of the class did in trying to recreate the Wakabayashi tape to the ideas of speaker No. 3 -- John's Olympian humor. In general, assignment split between those who thought this was an actual transcript because the ideas came out of association -- (bear = pain = shot) and those who felt it either was or wasn't a transcript because it was too/not thoroughly logical.

We tried to characterize No. 3's voice: a performer, creative, a leader -- Felstiner thought he was underprivileged because he was "inventive." Next we heard the tape of staff members reading the passage -- it was apparent that it was a transcript at this moment to most of the class, and finally to the 7 year old's original conversation. Kim saw the sincerity of No. 3's voice, and Jack talked about its amazing sweetness in comparison to its subject. It now became clear because of the accent that the child was a negro, though not, as Clive pointed out, disadvantaged. We concluded this section by having class members read aloud a dittoed excerpt from Under Milkwood -- "Boys boys boys/Come along to me" and listened to a recording of a professional company doing the passage. We liked ours better -- it had a lightness and freshness where the professional version was shrewish and jeering (this reading was justified, as we decided finally from the materials). We didn't have enough time to work to much purpose on this passage, however. The work on the tape was fine -- the Wakabayashi tape had prepared the class for this method of looking at language, and the class took to the opening question with a good deal of relish.

We concluded the class with an attempt to work with the opening paragraph of "The Magic Barrel," ala Chamber Theater. The class was interested here but a little weary and confused. Cynthia, who directed a try with the passage, was excited about attempting to justify her reading. (She gave Leo all the lines which conduced to self-consciousness of his official motive and position). The technique was not given much chance to work because of the length of the class, but was at any rate an introduction. Jack and Felstiner concluded the class by telling about the story. Felstiner: Salzman is a part (or creation of) Leo. Jack on the prospect of regeneration through the fallen girl, the death chant as chant for resurrection. The class talked from time to time throughout this section about the ideas in the story and what they said was an improvement over their usual response. Felstiner didn't think Salzman's daughter was a prostitute -- Paul Raymore found the right passage to pretty much prove she was.

March 6

Meeting of ten. Cynthia Ropes and Jack agreed that Cynthia would conduct a part of this class. We began by distributing passages (at the time undated) from pieces by Jim Kilgore, which Jim then read aloud:

> (1)
>
> Oh! I wonder what happened to the plants we put here by the window. The raspberry bush and that orange tree we grew from a seed -- They're gone, probably thrown away; but maybe not, Bobby's mother might have let Bobby keep them. She had always cared for them before, making sure they had plenty of water. She even told me one day that it was a good idea to have a few plants in the room, but violets or zineas, she thought, would be better.
>
> Once she offered Bobby one of her African violets, which she kept on the coffee table in the living room. I remember one weekend seeing these plants, three of them, on the antique table with Bobby's mother and three other women sitting there in the living room, talking. I

heard one of the women tell Bobby's mother how beautiful the plants were. I wonder what she would have said if the raspberry bush was there instead.

(10/20/66)

(2)

I remember as a boy how I used to keep a few plants by my bedroom window. There was the orange tree and the raspberry bush which I had planted from seed and the banana plant which I had brought home from Florida when it was a small, almost unnoticeable sprout with its tiny, yellow-green leaves. It was so small that for awhile I thought it might be just a weed. But soon it grew over a foot high with new leaves sprouting from the top one at a time, each pushing up from the stem, rolled up tightly in a long thin tube, then slowly unfurling into a large dark green, oval shaped leaf. But as a new leaf was born, the oldest leaf, perhaps only a few weeks old, wilted and drooped; its color turned to a sickly yellow. It would not fall off the plant but just shriveled up and hung from the stem -- changed from a green leaf to a brown, dry, twisted form.

(11/17/66)

(3)

When the sun gets low you just turn in towards shore and set up camp at the water's edge. The day ends; the next day will be different.

The next morning, perhaps, you awake to the gentle pitter-patter of rain falling on the tent and the paper leaves above you. The others are asleep. The spruce and fir are quiet. You see them there through the tent door as soon as you lift up the flaps. The whole forest is covered with a chalky mist and the lake is a blank grey wall, but you can hear tiny droplets hitting the water's surface. It sounds like the tinging sound of small pebbles pelting a frozen lake. You can hear the rain falling through the aspen trees; but the evergreens are still quiet. Their bristly needles catch the small droplets, the fan shaped branches are dark green, tipped with glass.

--Jim Kilgore
(1/30/67)

Cynthia asked the question she is most concerned with in writing: Why do it? and wanted to approach the passages in this way. The implication here was that the third was the best passage because the author was involved in the materials and the reader sensed this. Then began a discussion of why this involvement was important to the reader. Some felt the second passage was merely the "biography of a plant" -- Zoller going so far as to say it was technical -- while the third had to do with experience that everyone had had and could share in. But what about something like Brave New World, Zoller asked -- obviously a work in which the reader was involved, yet which was "fantasy."

CYNTHIA: Which passage do you all think is more successful? You know, which are you immediately more attracted to?

DALE: The second one, because I've experienced the same thing. I think other people have too --

CYNTHIA: Do you get the feeling that it's -- I don't know -- it's more sincere? That it's really him talking?

GREG: It sounds more like him than the first one.

DOUG: The first one doesn't sound like he knows what he's talking about.

CYNTHIA: It really occurs to you that the second one was written later! (Laughing)

JACK: Okay. We omitted the dates purposesly. But his first passage is an early passage written as an assignment (which was to write a monologue), as Jim says. The second passage is an expansion of materials that were touched on in the first exercise. But this second passage was also written a good time ago, in the first quarter, and after he had written the monologue about the African violets, after he had free-associated, so to speak, into a tape recorder. Jim and I talked briefly about this tape, which revealed that some of the material -- the plants -- was really part of his life and not fictional. Then he wrote the second passage. Lastly, the camping experience was a personal essay he wanted to write last quarter. Okay? So we've arranged these passages chronologically, and obviously we think there's development or change.

* * *

JACK: All right, it's important to talk about why the first passage is artificial, why the second one is sincere, -- and whether sincerity is the most important quality in the last passage. And how do you know it's really there?

PAUL: I don't think sincerity is as important as the fact that in the second he was able to sort of paint a picture that is completely realistic, you know.... Where the first passage, you know, is something that's probably a lot more meaningful to him, but doesn't convey a heck of a lot to the reader because it lacks a lot of -- images, you know, impressions, that he probably feels but doesn't put on paper.

CYNTHIA: One thing is that the last one seems to be what you were saying -- a description -- and the first one has more action in it and the action isn't successful. Maybe it's easier to describe something than to talk about something happening....

ZEESE: One of the reasons why I think that all three of these passages are interesting to see together is the obvious improvement and the kind of vividness that Paul is talking about. But what about the ideas in them? Do you see any ideas that are similar? An idea that grows or develops from one passage to the next?

PAUL: The relationship of growing things, I guess. -- All these nature things, you know, impress him.

ZEESE: What's the quality of his experience with nature? I mean, obviously I'm thinking of one word and I want you to guess it.... All right, I think it is the experience of growing things, as Paul said. But it's also an aesthetic experience. He's talking about beauty -- about poetry. Okay. Now obviously we think that the second and third passages are well written. But I like number three a lot better because I think it's getting closer to Jim's own aesthetic vision --

* * *

JACK: You've made a judgment -- that the last passage is the best, the most personal, the most direct, the most pleasing. But why is it so much more effective than, say, the second passage? Suppose we think in terms of drama. Are both passages dramatic? What does passage three really offer us that passage two does not? But Cynthia, this is your class -- (Laughter) So I'll be quiet. (More laughter)

CYNTHIA: I think we ought to make the writing relevant to all of us. We can work with the words here, and gain some appreciation for what it is to really write well...

STEVE: Well, the second passage is much more technical than the third, and that's why I don't like it as much.

CHUCK: I disagree ith that. I liked the second one, because it's sort of original. It's not nearly as dry as the first.

STEVE: No, but it's still technical --

CHUCK: Well, there's something new -- like "a leaf was born," talking about how it rolled tightly into --

FRANCIE: The third passage offers you immediacy which the second passage doesn't. I guess maybe it's because it's written in the present tense and second person or something. It's as if you can see this unfurling right before you instead of your talking about something which happened maybe last week, and he's just describing it for you. Here it's as if he's showing you pictures of it, or just sitting there looking at the forest....

DOUG: Maybe I'm wrong, but I don't think we're reading the second one carefully enough. The third one appeals to you -- maybe it appeals to everyone, it appeals to me too -- because of Jim's language, because of images that it has, like "chalky mist" and "droplets hitting the water's surface." But when I read the second one again -- "It was so small that after awhile I thought it might be just a weed. But soon it grew over a foot high," etc. -- there is drama here, as Jack was saying, especially in the last line where it says, "It would not fall off the plant, but just shrivelled up and hung from the stem." You get this idea of a life force -- it isn't just an uninteresting plant. You get the change from thinking it was a weed, and how small it was, and insignificant, to how it grew.

FRANCIE: But it still doesn't appeal to your senses. You don't feel as if you're there. You may feel, for example, that you see this plant, that you're observing it. Okay. But in the third passage you feel like you're standing right in the middle of the forest .....

HELENE: I don't think you can say the third one's better just because it appeals to you more, or just because you like the language more.

PAUL: Well, how else can you judge it? You don't say, you know, that it's got to be something like that to take place -- where he writes something and it strikes everybody the same way. It's just sort of impossible, because people are just plain different, you know, and they've had different experiences. So some person who has never been out in the forest at all, you know, well, he might not have any idea of this type of sensuous experience that the author's communicating in the third passage. He might have seen Walt Disney movies of weeds growing and stuff and the second passage might naturally appeal to him -- because it's something he's experienced. Whereas someone who has been out in the forest, and has felt this sense of life that one feels all around oneself -- when you're walking out there all alone among growing things -- well, the third passage might be a lot more relevant to this person. It's just a matter of personal experience. I mean, when he sets out to write something, the author doesn't set out to just shove it right down your throat, and say, "This is the way it's got to be. You're going to take it this way and nothing else." He can't --

DOUG: Well, what if we read just the second passage, and not the third at all. Would it be successful?

PAUL: Well, I don't think anybody's saying it's not successful. If we had the second isolated by itself, it'd be a fairly good passage. You know, we probably wouldn't have this argument about sensuous experience. But I think the comparison makes the third one a lot better than the second.

CYNTHIA: Do you think there was such a thing as the "author's purpose" in the two passages? I mean, we're talking about them as if they're both trying to do the same thing --

FRANCIE: I can see one difference -- I don't know whether this is a difference in purpose or not -- but in the second passage he's describing a process or a growing thing, which occurs over a period of time, maybe a week or two weeks, or something, and in the last passage he's describing something which perhaps takes place in a short amount of time, or could be instantaneous. But the point is that in the second passage, he's sort of condensing quite a period of time --

CYNTHIA: How are the two different in describing a person's experience. -- Do the two things matter?

JIM K: They're both different experiences.

HELENE: Yes, the last one is an experience that you're sharing -- I mean it's your experience -- and in the second one it's as if the plant's alive. It's about the plant, not you --

CYNTHIA: I think that's the difference between the two passages! What you're saying is that the only way you really ever appreciate anything is by your own experiences --

(Mumbled agreeing and disagreeing)

DOUG: You mean an author can never give you an experience successfully just through writing --

STEVE: How about 1984?

(Thoughtful silence)

FRANCIE: 1984 makes you feel like you've been through the experience.....

PAUL: You could imagine space flight without actually having gone up. You can imagine some of the feelings and emotions that say some of these guys who've gone up in the capsules and stuff have felt, though you've never been up there yourself. And somebody writing about them could make them very real to you. And it would be sort of a personal experience for yourself --

Despite some of the usual lapses in logic, excessive generalizations, etc., I think it became evident to the group that the realm of mutual experience through which the writer was able to communicate with the reader was something more essential than mere physical experience. Douglas Tom's defense of the second passage as dramatic; his statement that this passage expressed a boy's love for a plant; Francie Chew's idea about the compression of time in this passage (an idea that a few people returned to later as proof of the absence of drama in the second passage -- "a nature study in stop-action photography") -- this kind of struggling pleased Jack and me. Of course we took issue with some of these ideas, and Jack concluded the discussion of Jim's work by 1) stressing the power evident in the longer sentences of the second passage and the felt intensity and grief of Jim as speaker here; and 2) pointing out that the "dying" in the second passage reappeared in the last passage in such images as "paper leaves," "branches tipped with glass," "frozen lake." Here we returned to Cynthia's opening question: Why write? And Jack said that part of the answer might lie in the way Jim moved from a poignant treatment of nature to a treatment of nature as aesthetic experience. Perhaps some of the students understood the paradoxical way Jim was attempting to cope with lifelessness. An important session, I think, for while Cynthia really didn't conduct the class, neither did Jack and I -- toward the middle of the hour the class was literally running itself, even shaping the discussion.

We ended by splitting class in half and working on "One Cold and Rainy Night" -- a poem by an eleven-year-old Negro girl. (See Herbert Kohl's article in New York Review of Books, November, 1966.) I had prepared a "voiceless" version of this and the students re-wrote it, attempting to put voice into it. Only Rettig's was really interesting -- an adolescent amazed and amused that he'd condescend to being involved in a quasi-mystical experience. The class was tired by this time -- didn't really want to talk about the passage. I spoke of the repetition of "One Cold and Rainy Night" as an innovation, of the "light" as not a literal fact (glinting eyes) poorly expressed, but as fantasy and mystery, as creation.

March 7

Meeting with ten. We worked with two poems by 11-year-olds: "Shop with Mom"* and "The Junkies,"* both of which were from Herbert Kohl's article in The New York Review of Books (November, 1966).

SHOP WITH MOM

I love to shop with mom
And talk to the friendly grocer
And help her make the list
Seems to make us closer.
--Nellie, age 11

THE JUNKIES

When they are
in the street
they pass it
along to each
other but when
they see the
police they would
run some would
just stand still
and be beat
so pity ful
that they want
to cry
--Mary, age 11

"Shop with Mom" drew neutral ("cute, but so what") to negative reactions. Kim saw it almost being written in "we" language as in Jack and Jill Mag: "We love to shop with Mom"; and we talked about this as being similar to advertising which creates a compulsory intimacy with the writer. We compared the missing initial introductory beat of "seems to make us closer" to the "Hinx Minx" poems' missing introductory beat, and spent some time beating this out on the table. Again, the missing syllable was seen to be enforcing a kind of intimacy -- the "it" must be understood by the reader -- then drawing him into an informal, casual relationship with reader -- the question was, whether this relationship was desirable or, finally, honest. I said that I felt the language of the poem was "adult" -- the child's attempt to please an adult, rather than an expression of the child's own experience.

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*Reprinted from "Teaching the 'Unteachable,'" by Herbert Kohl, published by The New York Review, 250 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019: Price: $1.00. Copyright c 1967 by Herbert R. Kohl.

JIM W.: (Complaining) This is just sort of like nursery rhymes.

JACK: What's the matter with nursery rhymes?

JIM: I'm too big for nursery rhymes.

JACK: Well, Jim, I hope you won't be by the end of the year. (Laughter)

ZEESE: Okay, but can you put it another way besides saying it's like nursery rhymes? Carlos, what do you think of this poem?

CARLOS: I think it's cute.

ZEESE: Cute? Do you say that with a sneer or with approbation?

CARLOS: Well, I don't know -- there's just something in it that reminds me of a little girl. No, I just think it's cute, and nice for a little girl. It's not very creative -- just a nice little rhyme.

JACK: So "cute" was okay, Carlos, when you used it?

CARLOS: I didn't mean it with a sneer, and I didn't mean to praise it. She has a feeling for rhyme or poetry, in some sense. But there's nothing that really moves me, beyond that.

ZEESE: You're saying "cute" in the sense that your attitude is really neutral. Kim -- What do you think?

KIM: It's just a happy little rhyming poem, and it -- even her feeling doesn't seem that deep to me -- maybe just because of the cliche, "friendly grocer." "Friendly grocer" is just -- you know, little kids' books will have sometimes, you know, just the same sort of thing: "A" is for -- same line and everything.

ZEESE: Margie, what do you think of that?

MARGIE: The last line, from an eleven-year-old -- I thought that was pretty good. I mean, thinking in terms of relationships and things like that. "It seems to make us closer" -- it caught my attention.

JACK: Why does that last line appeal to you? Do you have any idea? I think it's the center of the poem -- But how? why? Jim?

JIM W.: I don't think that. The phrase "It seemed to make us closer" just doesn't sound like what I would think an eleven-year-old would be saying.

KIM: It's the one line that isn't really cliched. -- You know what usually makes people closer -- they say "death" and all these things; but -- you know, helping Mom make the list -- it makes us closer: I can just see them, you know, both bent together, figuring out what they're going to eat. It's real.

MARGIE: Yes, it's just fresh and natural --

JACK: Could this idea of freshness -- I'm still trying to account for the curious quality in that line --

ZEESE: I want to make one digression here and point out something about the line, and then we'll come back to this meaning business. What about the rhythm of that last line, let's say the meter of that last line?

GEORGE: It breaks down -- "Seems to make us closer" (Almost sung, accenting the meter) But the "closer" doesn't go like that -- the accent is on the first foot.

ELAINE: No, that's right: Séems to máke us clóser. (Accompanied by hitting the table) Isn't that right?

ZEESE: Shouldn't you have an "it" in there?

ELAINE: I know, but the "it" is sort of -- that's one reason it's sort of more personal in a way -- because it doesn't have an "it".

JACK: Right. Well, why is it more personal? Okay, the "it" is dropped out -- the first beat of that iambic unit is dropped out. It's an ellipsis.

GEORGE: What do you mean?

JACK: Well, ordinarily, George, wouldn't you say, "And help her make the list/ It seems to make us closer"? Grammatically, you'd put in the "it" to refer to making the list.

GEORGE: But for rhythm you wouldn't?

JACK: No, no, for rhythm you would too --

ZEESE: Why don't we do it? Why don't we read it aloud? Let's do both versions of the poem. Okay, let's do the first version of this poem, and let's beat out the major beat, and see if you hear the "it" dropping out, okay?

(Unison voices chanting poem in metrical accents, accompanied by beating of hands and sandals on the table)

JACK: Well, all right, we were béating óut these básic béats of the póem. (Accenting his words by beating on the table) Almost any poetry, any form of poetry, or song will have a beat (More beating) -- 4/4 time, 3/4 time and so on. We were beating the beat, but what you heard was a kind of musical structure that was over that beat. (Every word still accented with a bang

(Elaine drums on the table -- ending with a click of the tongue)

JACK: Beautiful, Elaine. Now, how would you like to do it really seriously, with both hands so we can hear it, and say the poem while you beat it? Can you do that?

(Rhythmic rendition by Elaine with both hands on the table)

JACK: Beautiful. That's because you sing -- that's why you can do that.

ZEESE: Let's have her put the "it" in.

(Elaine begins beating)

JACK: You see? Even when "it" is dropped out, you still have to pause a little bit before you say the last line. There's a silence in there that takes the place of the beat. (Jack repeats poem over softly with stresses) Did you hear the pause then? The pause is a beat, and it's silent. Okay, can anyone explain why dropping out the reference word seems to create a kind of intimacy?

KIM: Well, it's conversational. It's musing, and she's right there, and she's assuming that we know what she's talking about --

JACK: Exactly. She's assuming we're as familiar with "it" as she is. She knows she can drop "it" -- and all this is the surface innocence that characterizes the rhyme.

ZEESE: The next question is: Is this a kind of intimacy you would like to be associated with? Obviously, there are some kinds of writers who manage to achieve intimacy, and it's a beautiful thing. What about this? Do you like her getting this close to you?

ELAINE: Oh yes, I do. But it depends on whether you can identify with the whole situation, I think. You have to be able to understand, at least feel it yourself --

KIM: That last line is the only thing that redeems this poem for me. The rest just -- you know, they have these books -- the Jack and Jill Magazine or something where they have the center foldout and all this stuff about, you know -- We love to shop with Mom. (Said sticky-sweetly) "We love to clean our rooms."

ELAINE: We?

KIM: I know, I know. That's the difference. But it's still just too much like that.

(Loud confusion)

ZEESE: What's wrong with saying "we"?

ELAINE: It's making that judgment for you --

KIM: I don't think children even like it that much. I never did. And you know -- "We talk to the friendly grocer" (Mimicking a saccharine speaker) Assuming you know because --

JACK: Come on, be articulate, Kim.

KIM: It's hard, isn't it? (Laughter) It's just "the friendly grocer" -- The publishers are assuming that we are going to like him because -- we're the establishment: "the friendly grocer," "the friendly fireman" --

ELAINE: "the friendly policeman" --

KIM: -- "policeman Jim," you know. Thousands of books on "Policeman Jim."

JACK: What are you actually objecting to?

KIM: It's not really her.

JACK: Good. It's not Nellie herself. You don't agree, Elaine?

ELAINE: It isn't impersonal; it could be, if someone was generalizing about their childhood in some way, like talking to _any_ friendly grocer -- any grocer that's friendly. But she's not saying that. I think it's a particular grocer that was friendly.

JACK: I think you're right. But for us the phrase bears a burden -- of what? What's it "loaded" with? (_Silence_) Can't anybody feel what the burden of that phrase is?

ELAINE: The responsibility, it seems to me, to be friendly.

JACK: Yes, okay. Responsibility. What's it trying to do?

JIM W.: Trying to sell you. "We want your money...."

JACK: The phrase -- the poem itself -- imposes an apparently phony middle class morality on us. This is what we're objecting to. And yet we probably wouldn't condemn Nellie for using it or writing this kind of rhyme. We know at once that the rhyme is not deeply personal. But it's probably an authentic expression of a certain lightness in Nellie. And she accepts the world around her which may be all right, I suppose. And yet we worry about it -- the values of that world.

ZEESE: I think that, again, the thing that bothers me about it is not the values themselves which are really okay. They're not very deep, certainly. It's a kind of self-consciousness toward the audience. This is a girl, I think, telling the audience -- the adult audience -- what it wants to hear. She's using adult language -- the language of the adults who write Jack and Jill Magazine -- "the friendly grocer."

JACK: What's the matter, Marjorie?

MARGIE: Well, I think we could be reading a lot into it. I mean, I can imagine some little eleven-year-old girl just writing this and not thinking, "Let's see, am I imposing adult language?" "Am I borrowing adult values?"

JACK: You don't mean that she's consciously doing all this, do you Zeese?

ZEESE: No, she's writing it for a teacher, who's this nice, forty-year-old motherly woman whom she likes, and she ought to. But she's writing it for the teacher, she's not writing it for herself -- or really out of her own experience with that grocer. It's "the friendly grocer," you know, the cliche, instead of "Mr. Archeginian," or whatever his name is.

JIM W.: I like the first idea better -- that there is _a_ friendly grocer to be distinct from most of the grocers.

GEORGE: I do too.

ZEESE: She's thinking of one grocer, but at the same time --

JACK: If she had used his name, it would've been different, and it wouldn't have fit the scheme. (Agreement from most of the class) You could even admire the girl's use of the scheme. And she got that scheme by reading -- she really had to have gotten it by reading -- Jack and Jill. And you feel that she wouldn't violate that scheme for anything. The scheme is part of what she wants --

MARGIE: You mean the rhyme scheme?

JACK: Yes, and the metrical scheme, the familiar shape of the rhyme, the blandness, lightness, security and pleasure of it -- for better or worse. But I suppose that finally many of us find these four lines hard to believe.

In "The Junkies" we worked principally with "pity ful" -- why split up the word? Here the conclusion was not that it was a spelling error or that the child was trying to say "full of pity" but that the child (here Mark and Kim saw the light) was seeing the word freshly, with its original sense and power. As Jack put it, it was a gesture "to mean the word." Jack and I concluded by talking about the terrific empathy between child and junkies; I was working with the junkies as "child like" in the sense of their helplessness (they want to cry), calling the dope "it" as making the name a kind of secret, and game. Jack talked of the girl as having the all-encompassing knowledge and pity of a mother, and spoke briefly of poetry as a means of coping with experience (as in work chants, milking songs, etc.).

JACK: Can you see what the essential problem is in trying to read "The Junkies" aloud?

ELAINE: There's no punctuation.

MARGIE: Also the rhythm groups, or whatever you call it, run into the lines. They don't end with each line --

JACK: Yes, it's harder to hear the rhythm. The poem simply doesn't have a clear, concise, systematic, metrical structure. Okay, any other difficulty in reading the poem? Kim?

KIM: Well, didn't she try to get three words in each line, except for the end? Maybe that's where the problem is......

(Carlos reads aloud the Junkie poem)

ELAINE: Another thing is it changes tenses. And also the "pity ful" -- that's the one word I tripped on because it's "pity-ful" and not "pitiful," as you really say it --

JIM: Is that the way it was written?

JACK: Yes. So how do we want to say that line?

GEORGE: -- "pitiful."

JACK: You really want to "translate" it into "pitiful"?

(Various opinions)

KIM: I think that Mary's spelling is closer to the real meaning of the word. It isn't just "pitiful" -- it's "pity-ful" -- full of pity. I really think you can say "that's 'pity-ful'" and mean it. She says "so pity-ful" -- and she meant it when she said it.

JACK: That's the thing -- to mean the word. If you're talking about voice -- you probably can't achieve a writing voice unless you do mean the word. Kim just said something terrifically important -- this line dramatizes her idea..... At any rate, I think that if we had a tape of Mary reading her poem, you would hear that child's voice render "pity-ful" so that you could hear the pain she's feeling --

ZEESE: I want to get back to Elaine's idea about this line -- that this is not an adult response, that it's a child's response -- "They want to cry." Now, you said that that didn't bother you, however.

ELAINE: Except that it's sort of incongruent for a pusher or a junkie to want to cry.... Their wanting to cry is her idea of what would be a very pitiful thing.

ZEESE: You said that this doesn't go with the junkies, though. "But some would just stand still and be beat." Is this the normal adult reaction to being beaten -- to just stand still and be beaten? I think that "so pitiful that they want to cry? is the child's response. But I also think that it's the junkie's response, and I think that on that level this girl really does understand these people. She's looking at the junkies as children, as helpless... just standing there and being beaten. These are adults, you know, these are men -- "so pity-ful they want to cry."

KIM: It's her pity too, and that's what makes it so good and so awful.

JACK: What kind of person would pass exactly this kind of sympathetic judgment: "so pity-ful that they want to cry"?

HELENE: You have something in mind?

JACK: Well, a second ago, I suddenly thought, "I've heard this before." Let's start with the idea that we often attribute foreknowledge to the child. It's a familiar idea -- the wisdom of fools and children. At the moment the child decides to do something you disapprove of, he's already lived through the spanking. He's taken everything into account so that before you can move, he's already saying, "I knew you were going to lift that stick that way to hit me." In other words, he's always interceding for himself even before he commits the crime. And that idea of foreknowledge and self-intercession made me think of

Moses pleading for the people: "Let my people go." But the person who most intercedes for us is, of course, the mother. She knows our experience most deeply in a way, knows our pain more than we know it ourselves. And it occurred to me that the line's deeply maternal with a kind of terrific knowledge and intuition in it.

ZEESE: There's another thing in there that I think is really beautiful -- "They pass it along to each other" -- What's she talking about?

ELAINE: The dope.

ZEESE: Why doesn't she say so?

ELAINE: Because I guess when she says "junkies," she figures that you know what junkies are -- And that they have been dealing with dope.

KIM: She doesn't associate it with dope, evil, you know. They pass it along to each other, like sort of a game.

ZEESE: They're secret too, at the same time. She doesn't say the name. It's "it" -- they pass "it" along to each other. And I think that's a good idea -- this idea of its being a game. But I think that not naming it implies again a kind of intimacy with the junkie. She didn't have to name it. She's an eleven-year-old girl who knows this world....

JACK: Is there anything to be said for that change in tense: "But when they see the police they would run"?

JIM: You're sort of seeing it happen. All of a sudden the police do show up and you see them run.

JACK: Yes, and it's funny because -- I don't know the name of that tense -- whatever it is -- does anybody know the name of it?

GIRLS: (In unison) Conditional!

JACK: Okay, conditional tense. It seems to remove us from experience, actually. But it doesn't do that here. It seems suddenly to make it graphically real; as if at that moment she's remembering an actual, specific incident. That's the effect of it -- oddly enough.

MARGIE: Yes. If you say "When they see the police they run," it's just a factual statement.

JACK: Another generalization, yes.

MARGIE: But on the other hand, if you're talking about an event, and if you say "When they saw the police they ran." -- Well, that's also just a report. It's this combination that's really kind of unique, the way she does that.

KIM: It isn't "They would run," but "They would run." I think it's old usage -- wishing to. And you can just feel that strain more.

JACK: Yes, there's tension in it, and just the strain or tension between the two tenses seems to be valuable. Also the poem seems to move from essentially prose rhythms into something much closer to metrical organization at the very end. It breaks into about three large pieces that are essentially prose-like, and then the "so pity-ful that they want to cry" is beginning to suggest metrics. And that's rather nice, because the final expression of emotion is beginning to assume the more conventional form of song. We can think about poetry say, in terms of Joyce's use of Aristotle in Portrait of the Artist with the notion of the original utterance of the poet being simply the cry -- the cry uttered probably in a cadenced form while he works and as something to help him work. You may have heard milking songs with the milk squirting into the bucket. And of course, it's absolutely rhythmical. The getting of the milk depends upon not disrupting that rhythm. And the girl achieves the rhythm by trying in effect to woo the cow. And that's poetic and also matter of fact. She's got to keep the cow quiet, soothed, and gently involved in this process. (See chants, marching songs, laments -- in each case the language sustains a person or makes possible some kind of necessary human action.) No, this poem "The Junkies" is probably beginning to approach that kind of effort. The girl isn't working, she's not trying to accomplish a task, but in some way she's coping with experience. And you're beginning to get a rhythmic, plaintive sound at the end of it.

Finally we worked on "One Cold and Rainy Night"* (also from the Herbert Kohl article) and here we talked of "all was in the bed" as opposed to the common "all were in bed" -- this last is a dead metaphor for "all were asleep"; but the child means exactly what she says, and we see and feel the bed: this, says Jack, is "literal-mindedness serving a metaphoric purpose."

ONE COLD AND RAINY NIGHT

It was one cold and rainy night when I was walking through the park and all was in the bed. I saw a owl up in the tree. And all you could see was his eyes. He had big white and black eyes. And it was rainy and it was very very cold that night. And I only had on one thin coat. I was cold that rainy night. I was colder than that owl. I don't know how he could sit up in that tree. It was dark in the park. And only the one who had the light was the owl. He had all the light I needed. It was rainy that stormy night. And I was all by myself. Just walking through the park on my way home. And when I got home I went to bed. And I was thinking about it all that night. And I was saying it was a cold and rainy night and all was in bed.

(Kim reads "One Cold and Rainy Night")

JACK: How do you account for that use of the article -- "All was in the bed"?

ELAINE: It's an accent. Otherwise, "All was in bed" is just flat.

ZEESE: What does "the" say in that passage? She's really using a metaphor to say that everyone was asleep. I think the "the" reinforces that statement. She doesn't want to say that people happen to be in bed in certain places, but that everyone was asleep -- "Everyone was in the bed."

---

*Reprinted from "Teaching the 'Unteachable,'" by Herbert Kohl, op.cit.

ELAINE: "The bed" being the place you sleep.

ZEESE: Right. She's not merely saying "Everyone was asleep."

JACK: That strikes you as peculiar, Jim?

JIM W.: I guess a little.

JACK: A literal translation of "Everyone was in the bed" would be "Everyone's asleep." But why is this literal translation inadequate?

KIM: She's drawing us a picture --

JACK: Fine --

ELAINE: It's just not the usual way of describing it.

JACK: All right, but how is it unusual?

JIM W.: Everybody's in one big communal bed.

ZEESE: Well, this is what we were talking about with Father Ong: the use of the article as personal, as drawing the reader and the writer very close to each other. They were in "the bed." Everyone knows bed is associated with sleep. "Everyone was in bed" is the common metaphor we all use for "everyone was asleep."

KIM: It's too vague.

ZEESE: "Everyone was in the bed" say, "You know what this experience is like."

JACK: Okay. She's lapsing the metaphor "in bed" (meaning "to be asleep") to what? --

KIM: Well, it's no longer a metaphor. It's real.

JACK: Yes. She means exactly what she's saying. She's expressing it as graphically as possible. She's lapsing the metaphor -- "in bed" -- to concrete actuality -- "the bed." So she's being literal (bed is a chipped white frame, thin mattress, etc.), but also poetic, since this bed itself now has become sleep. It seems to me that this need to lapse language back to object -- which then changes the word into the reality of the object -- suggests a kind of totemic mentality....

We saw this same seriousness in "and only the one who had the light." We began talking about the owl, but George first was worried about meaning of metaphor (a word which we were tossing around rather freely) and finally about "reading things into the poem." Yet Elaine said the piece was made, hence it was a kind of artifact outside the child's control; and Kim said quite beautifully, that "the metaphors are ours: the reality (of the light shining from the owl) is the child's." We talked about invocation/exorcism in the repetition of "cold and rainy night" throughout the poem, and distributed the snake chant from "Black Orpheus" Voodoo scene.

We also handed out my "voiceless" version of "One Cold and Rainy Night":

> One cold, rainy night when everyone was in bed I was walking through the park and saw an owl in a tree. All I could see were his eyes, which were large and colored white and black. As I have said it was rainy and quite cold that night and I had on only a thin coat. I was colder even than the owl, and I couldn't imagine how he could remain in the tree. It was dark and the only source of light was the owl: he emitted all the light necessary for me. I was alone, merely walking through the park on my way home. When I got home I went to bed and continued to think about my experience for the remainder of the night. As I mentioned earlier, it was a cold, rainy night and everyone was in bed.

This was quite a dramatic success because, just as we hoped, the entire class saw without question that it was terrible!

March 13

Today John Felstiner visited and spoke about the form of Old English poetry, and the alliteration, then read -- quite dramatically -- 30 or so lines from "The Wanderer" in the original. The students were to try and make out or guess at words, and from these guesses to attempt to create the poem. He broke the poem into sections, read it over slowly several times and we all wrote. Some reactions: sea, storm, contest or battle, anger, nostalgia, home-away-from-home, a lament. Most interesting. George Schmitten saw it as an argument between two speakers which, as Jack pointed out, it really is -- an internal dialogue between despair and nostalgia. All this was quite fascinating and the students liked it a lot. Whether or not it has anything to do with voice, whether it is a guessing game and Felstiner's beautiful reading "directed" the reactions and "stretched" the sound of the poem (obviously this is true to some extent), I'm not sure, but at any rate the exercise in "free association," in listening to the language as sound, was exciting.

April 4 -- New Quarter.

Meeting with ten -- of which five showed up. Jack had prepared a schedule and selection of materials for the first month, which we distributed to the class. He talked briefly about the schedule and the reading we would be doing (The Lime Twig and The Questions by Jack, Ballad of the Sad Cafe and Member of the Wedding -- the play -- by Carson McCullers, along with John Hersey's Hiroshima, with Adventures in the Skin Trade and Under Milkwood by Dylan Thomas recommended) and prepared the class for work on the forthcoming NBC production of The Questions and said a little about John Hersey, who will visit us this quarter. Then we worked with an outline of Carson McCuller's novel The Member of the Wedding. The class had not read the novel or the play, of course, and the idea was to try to get them to think dramatically about this summary of unfamiliar fictional materials. This idea of working in the dark and with two forms of the same story strikes me as a good one -- but the class really couldn't go very far with it. The outline may have been too elaborate, or the whole idea may have been too difficult in the first place. I hope the students have more success on the writing exercise we gave them (using a paragraph from the novel as a way into the play).

We next worked with "An Ugly Man"[*]-- a tall tale which will serve as a model for tall tales we have asked them to write.

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[*] "An Ugly Man" from MULES AND MEN by Zora Neale Hurston, published by J. B. Lippincott Company. Copyright 1935 by Zora Neale Hurston; copyright renewed 1963 by John C. Hurston and Joel Hurston. Used by special arrangement with J. B. Lippincott Company.

An Ugly Man

"Hey, Jim, where the swamp boss? He ain't here yet."

"He's ill -- sick in the bed Ah hope, but Ah bet he'll git here yet."

"Aw, he ain't sick. Ah bet you a fat man he ain't," Joe said.

"How come?" somebody asked him and Jose answered:

"Man, he's too ugly. If a spell of sickness ever tried to slip up on him, he's skeer it into a three weeks' spasm."

Blue Baby stuck in his oar and said: "He ain't so ugly. Ye all jus' ain't seen no real ugly man. Ah seen a man so ugly till he could get behind a jimpson weed and hatch monkeys."

Everybody laughed and moved closer together. Then Officer Richardson said: "Ah seen a man so ugly till they had to spread a sheet over his head at night so sleep could slip up on him."

They laughed some more, then Clifford Ulmer said:

"Ah'm goin' to talk with my mouth wide open. Those men y'all been talkin' 'bout wasn't ugly at all. Those was pretty men. Ah knowed one so ugly till you could throw him in the Mississippi river and skim ugly for six months.

"Give Cliff de little dog," Jim Allen said. "He done tole the biggest lie."

"He ain't lyin'," Joe Martin told them. "Ah knowed dat same man. He didn't die -- he jus' uglied away."

We compared this to Faulkner and especially to John Knoepfle's steam boat captain's story of the turkeys and the disappearance of a certain river boat. The conversation turned toward myth, which Paul Raymore defined as an attempt to explain (rationalize) something -- and hence he felt that the story of the turkeys was a myth. Douglas Tom felt myth had a religious content which neither of the tall tales had. Shelley Surpin was good here: the turkey story didn't really explain anything, rather the disappearance of the boat was really the occasion for a story generated out of a need to create the impossible. Shelley and Cynthia talked of seeing myth in terms of a social role, myths of initiation and the lack of this kind of mythology today. Jack then began talking about myth in terms of the deepest psychic needs -- myths of violation, of prelapsarian paradise, of revenge. I contrasted the ugliness of the Gorgon to "the ugly man," talked of the tall tale as a game with language whose purpose was to stretch or take liberties with audience credibility in contrast to myth's total concern with spiritual or psychological truth. This discussion was exciting, for not only did the class begin it, but they sustained it -- and the subject seemed important for them.

During the last half of class we listened to a tape of sounds Carol had prepared and wrote on the basis of it. The sounds were thunder, a train, rain, metallic unintelligible human speech, a train station, perhaps. Shelley wrote a remarkable piece on concentration camp deportation -- truly frightening. She read it aloud and the class discussed it:

> In the beginning there is only blackness and wetness and rumbling, and form comes as a dark night, and a stormy seashore, and thunder. As the ears become accustomed to the sound, a railroad track separates itself from the craggy landscape. Cattle cars thunder then rumble down the track. Humans rumble within the cars against the walls. People pounding on wooden doors mix with ocean pounding rocky shores. Rain pelts everything; seven still planes zoom overhead.
>
> Sentries march back and forth perpendicular to the path of the train, and are passed by it. Black automobiles and horse drawn carts speed along the road which runs parallel to the tracks, the galloping horse drawing a cart with produce into the small town to the stockyards, which are in chaos as the human-laden cars pull into the town, braking for a short break for the engineer who has had a difficult time in the storm, with a screech.
>
> At the camp, there are quiet men, waiting, lighting cigarettes as the water drips off the concrete buildings, waiting for the next trainload.
>
> --Shelley Surpin

DOUG: It sounds like someone who's doing a narration on something like the war in Vietnam. Like a train, you know, of men who have just come in or something, and they're describing the things around -- that's the impression I got, right away.

CYNTHIA: Or not even that, it's like a relation of the visual, you know, know what I mean? If you were going to sort of write down what the film is -- it's like a film script!

PAUL: That's what I thought, too, like video-tape or something.

JACK: Perhaps that's what it sounds like. But sound tracks usually aren't poetic, are they? You know, going from the pounding of the ocean to the pounding of the box cars, to the people pounding on the doors of the box cars, the people pressed, packed into this moving space, treated like animals, and then going from this to horse-drawn carts moving as fast as cars, bringing the people like produce to the city, equating horse-drawn vehicle to mechanized vehicle, equating violent nature with the violent treatment of people -- it's all terrifying. It's a pretty poetic way to suggest concentration camps, isn't it? But I wonder if the sounds on the tape are going to produce similar reactions in each of us or different reactions.....

Next we read Paul Raymore's response:

> The thunder god is angry again. I hear the sound of his wrath and the sound of his tears falling from the eyes of the goddess he has reprimanded. She is very unhappy.
>
> Go get him Tex. Head him off at the pass.
>
> Now, girls, this is called a jog. It is done correctly, sitting a little forward in your saddle and keeping the horse's head up.
>
> Wish I could take the fastest train out of here, since I also have to mail a letter.
>
> Get out of that office you thief. What nerve, stealing from an office during lunch hour among all these people.
>
> Turn off that water. I can't stand a dripping faucet when I'm sleeping. Turn it off not on you idiot. I don't care if you do want to wash your hands.

> What great pictures come to mind when I'm able to hear sound completely isolated from all visual aids.
>
> Trains, thunder, stormy nights, rain falling in big, pearl-like drops, clouds of dust kicked up by the hoofs of horses ridden by girls. These and others all sping into mind as soon as I hear the sounds I associate with them.
>
> --Paul Raymore

JACK: Okay, what did you hear?

DOUG: A lot of jumping around.

CYNTHIA: But that's wrong. It's really wonderful.

JACK: But why, Cynthia?

CYNTHIA: Don't you see, he's made up a different voice for each sound.

SHELLEY: I think that's right, but some of them are more interesting than others.

DOUG: He's just playing around with some of them. Aren't you, Paul?

(Paul shrugs.)

JACK: I think Paul is playing sometimes with these voices, and the play certainly raises the question of the wrong kind of detachment, but some of these lines are wonderfully funny -- I must say I like the horse-back riding girls --

CYNTHIA: What does he say about the falling rain?

PAUL: (reading) "Trains, thunder, stormy nights, rain falling in big, pearl-like drops -- " That's it.

CYNTHIA: That's nice. That sounds like you.

I wrote about life as journey where the destinations have become meaningless, the tedium and mechanics of travel have become everything. This Jack attacked -- and justly, for it was merely a series of notes. But he doesn't think I took the sounds seriously, which bothered me. I'll rewrite the piece in tomorrow's class to see if I can bring out the quiet terror and despair I was trying to render.

> Thunder -- tottering on the edge of the sky. Trucks in convoy under the rain. Now it sounds like a train station. People keep entering. You hear the street outside, when the door opens. Smell of damp clothing, pleasant heat, machines of transportation, big, powerful, not frightening, but somehow irritating. The boring materiality of traveling between cities. Tedium more pertinent than the rain.
>
> This sounds like fire. It's strange how much fire and rain sound like each other. Since there is a fire, it must be the end of the journey -- a self-conscious fire in a little marble fireplace in someone's apartment.

> Clothes still bunched, skin still itching from the travel. "Sit down and relax," someone says. Mind still on the train or airplane or bus, cramped into a seat, aware of the textures and smells of the compartment. "Well, tell me all about it..." As if arrival were a solution, as if you ever arrived.
>
> --Zeese Papanikolas

JACK: How do you get this airplane stuff? I didn't hear any airplane.

ZEESE: I wasn't thinking about the sounds. Once I got started, once I heard what I thought was a train, I was thinking about the kind of irritability that you get when you've been sitting for a long time in a train station where all your perceptions seem heightened, and sound becomes very irritating. It was a kind of boredom, a kind of super-irritation for some reason at the loudness of this rather than at the depth of it.

CYNTHIA: What kind of convoys? Like military convoys? -- I'd have to hear it again -- It seemed to me it jumped to all these different things.

ZEESE: Yeah, it jumped after the truck convoys, then it jumped to this train station.

JACK: What was the phrase about "boring" something-or-other? Was it tedium? Boring what?

ZEESE: (flipping through pages) -- "boring materiality."

JACK: Ah! Boring materiality. Zeese, you ought to be shot!

ZEESE: Why?

JACK: Boring materiality? All right, maybe I'm wrong, but that's one of the ugliest phrases I've heard in a long time.

CYNTHIA: Materiality is not even a word!

JACK: Boreality. "Boring materiality." It's awful!

ZEESE: That doesn't strike me as being particularly ugly.

(Laughter)

CYNTHIA: What do you mean by it?

JACK: Well, it's not particularly beautiful.

PAUL: Ouch.

JACK: I think it's really ugly, really ugly. And I think that all the sentence fragments in that piece tend to work against any possible voice. I think that's a piece of tired writing.

ZEESE: Well, it probably is.

JACK: (laughing) Well, okay.

ZEESE: It's about a tired subject too.

JACK: Is concentration camps a tired subject?

ZEESE: No, I'm not saying that the subject of the sound is tired. I'm saying that I'm writing about weariness.

JACK: Yes, but you can't carry this pathetic fallacy too far --

ZEESE: No.

JACK: because it just tires us. To me, it doesn't create that much reality and I'm shocked. And I'm sensitive about this because I had a big argument with Leslie Fiedler (who's great, of course) about whether there was any such thing as ugly language. And I ended up by saying ugly language was unnecessary syntactical disruption, the rhythmic -- (Slap on the table). What? I'm not kidding -- What's the matter?

DOUGLAS: "Unnecessary syntactical disruptions" -- it's like "boring materiality!" (Laughter from class)

JACK: You say it. How would you say it?

PAUL: Well, first of all, I don't even see what you're arguing about.

JACK: Well, you know, it was a rather incoherent, jerky piece of writing. I didn't hear any voice, I didn't hear any real recreation of a single subject. Even though Paul jumped around, he had a series of recognizable little episodes, which seemed to me to work. Shelley recreated a single world out of the tape. You know, I'm just disturbed at the sentence fragments, that's all.

ZEESE: Yes, well I wasn't trying to write anything, I was just trying to take down things as they came to me.

JACK: I guess part of this does depend on method. For instance, I simply made a list of what I thought I was hearing, and then wrote a passage

ZEESE: Well, what I just read was a list.

JACK: Okay. At least your ending, Zeese -- that part about never arriving -- is terrific. Does anybody else want to read? Wait a minute, I want to read mine if you can stand it. By the way, Shelley, when you go from craggy landscapes to the short "break" for the engineers, those are two very different voices, and I'm bothered by them, by that leap -- and furthermore, Shelley, what about "zoom"?

Jack wrote a passionate piece on reasonless guilt and judgment without law or morality -- he was struck by the brutal and mechanical quality of the sounds -- their closeness.

> We exist in public, exposed, out of time, each of thrust from an unlocked metal room into a hollow crowd of iron, steel, rain. The rain itself -- this source of storm and life -- has become a monstrous,

> mechanical, unfluid source of penitential flux and monotony, as if the sky rains nails, or it rains inside some vast prison and there is no sky. Our public existence is our prison -- we live in a metal room filled with rusty rain and occupied by a stealthy, murderous warden who pries open the pedestrian secret boxes of our lives. And from that room, beyond the footsteps and voices of a crowd caught always in some terrifying interrogation after an inevitable catastrophe, brutal accident (our public crime), we are thrust into the world which is only a monstrous courtroom filled with the deep wet sounds of our threatening indifferent accuser. The edge of the knife is close to us.
>
> --John Hawkes

CYNTHIA: Do you really think so?

JACK: Yes.

CYNTHIA: But, just sort of generally, do you think that's the way we live? You say we live with our accuser --

JACK: Well, like the concentration camp piece, I got totally involved in that world, and suddenly, that's what it seemed to me to be --

DOUGLAS: That is a person speaking who's been caught in the rain for a long time, and it's cold and chilly --

ZEESE: I like the thing about rusty rain.

JACK: I mean, that was one of the most inhuman, frightening experiences I've been through in a long time..

DOUGLAS: What, the tape?

JACK: Yes. What did you -- (Laughter) What?

DOUGLAS: Well, it's raining outside, too, that adds to it, you know. I mean, it's grey.

JACK: Suddenly, the tape seemed to thrust us to the stark blankness beyond which there is no more, nothing except absolute, indifferent violence --

CYNTHIA: But I think the people in the tape are going somewhere -- I think there's life in the tape --

Jack read aloud Allyssa Hess's piece (from my Cubberley class) on the day which will end the world.

> The mist became cloudy, thick, and dark. It penetrated even the most sealed areas, enveloping everything. And every animal it reached dropped senseless into a small crumpled heap -- sleeping blissfully, with a peaceful but idiotic expression on its face.
>
> The mist lasted for two whole revolutions of the earth. Then, suddenly the laws of gravity were no more, or seemed not to be, for a great gale arose, and blew away the mist, carrying with it all the dreaming bodies. Floating, whirling through the air they became as shades and shadows only;

then they vanished.

The gale and loss of gravity somehow had also managed to fling off all man-made structures from the earth, but the plants and waters remained. The earth had shook off the poisoning growth upon her. Then day came.

--Allyssa Hess
(Cubberley High School student)

It seemed in keeping with the in-class writing we'd just done and served to illustrate again that even students younger than the freshmen had "world visions" as serious as those in Shelley's and Jack's pieces. We talked about the sudden and frightening detachment in Allyssa's passage ("idiotic expression") and the calm -- almost relief -- with which she accepted the end of the world, and spent a lot of time going over her second paragraph -- how it's closer to writing than speech (unlike her first paragraph, where there's speech), how formal or even Biblical phrasing and "silky" rhythms create the poise or unusual maturity of her accepting attitude.

Finally, we listened to Carol's letter on why she chose these sounds. A very fine and controlled and personal piece of writing on loneliness and freedom, which Carol thinks are inseparable, Europe being the emblem for her of both the pain and exultation of loneliness and freedom. A good day.

Dear Jack,

I chose these sounds because I associate them with a certain experience I have had, an experience that is both exulting and terrible. First of all, I couldn't imagine putting together a series of sounds without relating them to a single subject, to a person who hears them. And once I realized that, a single recurring image came to me. It's the image of a person walking alone in a large city, and in my mind it's always a European city. Part of that is, I think, very natural, since I tend to notice sounds much more vividly when I'm alone with no people to distract me. But the other part is drawn from a very romantic notion.

I've always been greatly fascinated by "loners," by people who have the courage to live their lives without the normal human ties most of us engage in. My childhood hero was Shane, the independent range rider, and solitary figures to me seem to be surrounded with an aura of mystery. I'm very attracted to that image and have day dreams of myself in Europe, alone and mysterious, in a trench coat with turned-up collar, walking in the rain. It's not totally imaginary, however. I've spent a good deal of time in Europe and have walked alone in the rain there. To be alone in Europe, thousands of miles from family and friends, free from any responsibility, ready for any adventure, is a great exprience. One is totally free.

There is, however, another side to that experience. Solitary figures live on the fringes of other people's lives, always on the outside, always on the move. They pass through the lives of those with happy families, warm and secure homes, and they are often walking down streets at dusk, looking at the lighted windows of homes, with no place to go that's warm with friends and lovers. There is a terrible emptiness, isolation and detachment about being the stranger who is always passing through.

I chose these sounds to suggest the atmosphere of a person who walks alone. They are the sounds I remember hearing when I was alone in Europe. The rain, the traffic, the subway, lighting a cigarette, walking into a crowded restaurant or bar -- these are all sounds I was very aware of. They are noises that mean I could go anywhere or do anything -- and that I didn't have anywhere in particular to go. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that these two experiences accompany one another.

--Carol Bentz

April 10

Full meeting. We began by talking about the TV production of Jack's play The Questions. The discussion was impressive here. Students were quick to see the play as a contest between the girl's parents and the father's idea of shame, and just how tenuous and crucial those ideas were. We talked of the different roles the father took -- Jack said he thought of him as the father, without naming him because he wanted us to see these various roles -- lover, husband, lawyer, psychiatrist -- in an original light. I added that not being actually able to identify the situation as father/daughter; psychiatrist/patient made all the ideas frighteningly relative. For the audience was not able to assume a stable position outside the questioning: "They are doomed to keep asking these questions over and over, in the same little room," someone said. "After all, the girl could light a cigarette, take a drink of water without the questioner's permission." Jack talked very openly about how he saw his play, and what he wanted from it, and I admired his frankness. It helped the class understand the play -- as well as me -- and in fact, the discussion at first took the form of asking Jack about the play. He talked about the play as an attempt to achieve a vision of purity outside of conventional moral terms, and wanted the actress who played the girl to project enough strength to somehow make us "believe" her version of the story -- in spite of the possibility suggested by the father. He talked of the play as being made almost entirely out of two characters' psychologies. We never know what happened between Adrian and the mother, probably nothing happened.

JACK: There are probably two ways of looking at the moment of the tryst, and in a way, the girl's attitude at that time might in some way relate to Member of the Wedding. I'm not sure. Of course, the girl in my play is considerably older, she's supposed to be seventeen. It seemed to me that the girl on television was rather older than seventeen. At any rate, she's childlike, or supposed to be childlike. Have you any idea how we can look at the tryst in two ways?

The disappointment the girl feels over its not being Adrian; the excitement she feels in seeing the mother in a tryst with somebody she thinks is Adrian, and then the violent outrage she expresses when it's not -- does any of this make sense?

ELAINE: Well, like making love. You know, your parents, like you can't really imagine...You know, you're just seeing them, maybe a slight kiss, you know, maybe nice words, you know, but you can't imagine them in bed making love or anything at all. And you know, all you know is what you see, like on TV between lovers or things. It's great to read in books or something, but between husband and wife or people that you just see commonly as just friends, it just seems very vulgar to her.

DOUG: It's embarrassing. Somehow it's too close to you if it's your parents, so you feel very awkward.

JACK: I suppose that what we're talking about -- this deep-rooted psychological experience or a fear -- would have something to do with Christian guilt. We're made to feel that the sexual act is illegal or unlawful or impure, whereas parents are the idealized, all-powerful, all-perfect figures -- to the child, at least. (Parents soon become quite the opposite as the child grows up.) (Laughter) At any rate, the parental act of love is called the primal scene, and fear of the primal scene seems to be something we all know. Hamlet may be suffering it. The protagonist of Graham Greene's Brighton Rock suffers a kind of constant terrific agony because of the primal scene. At any rate, this is one of the centers of The Questions. But what are we to make of the girl's eagerness to find her mother and Adrian in a tryst?

ELAINE: What's a tryst?

JACK: Anybody know? I suppose for us it's a euphemism. I think of it as a nineteenth century expression. A tryst between lovers, a secret meeting, a little secret encounter filled with moonlight and shame -- to me it's an amusing romantic expression and I meant it to be a key to the girl's attitude at the time. The girl is casual about her own sexual life but romantic about her mother....

ELAINE: Can I ask a question? When he's trying to get her to cry in the end and she says, "I won't cry, you won't get any emotions out of me," and he says, you know, "don't you feel ashamed...." Ashamed for what? Unless this is about the kill. At least it seems like it's building up to that when he's talking about the shame and everything.

KIM: I think it sort of ties in with the tryst too. That violent outrage -- I don't think it was so much at her parents. I mean of course she was enraged at her father. You know, he was sort of her ideal, she created him to be. But I think she was enraged against herself too, because she became excited about it -- you know. And that made it twice as awkward, the shame about that too. But she took it out another way.

CHUCK: Do you think she really liked her father?

JACK: Ah, that's a fine question! The reason I say so is that the director and I raised that question too, and of course it has very much to do with the character of the girl, with how an actress will play the girl. But again, I'd like to know a little more of what you all think, whether she simply loved her father that much, or what. Shelley?

SHELLEY: Well, it was just about the shame. It seemed as if he was asking her to feel shame, kind of generally. He wanted her to be able to look at things the way he looked at things. In other words, to see the sordidness, whereas she was trying to see things purely, and when she originally described the fox hunt it was bright and green, but the father described it all differently. In the beginning she just couldn't feel shame because she didn't have anything, or see anything, to be ashamed of -- everything was good. And he wanted her to be able to see bad.

JACK: That's not the way it is in the text. But all right, does anybody have any more feelings about the extent to which the girl loves her father?

JIM W.: Well, at the very first, it sounded like she had a regular Electra complex. But as it went on, I couldn't tell.

JACK: What do you think, Chuck? Your question a minute ago suggested some different ideas.

CHUCK: Kim was talking about the girl's father. I don't think she liked him toward the end. Maybe she actually hates him, and when she finally sees him down there growling like a fox, it comes out. Maybe she thinks her father's really a coward. Maybe she just thinks she likes the scones bit and all that, as a sign of purity.

JACK: The director felt pretty much the same way. He thought that finally the girl's innocence was really a weapon she was using against her father and that she was being terrifically destructive, simply trying to destroy him.

ELAINE: But I think she was for him in a way, like there was nothing wrong with any of it, you know.

KIM: As if her love was aesthetic, you know, just like the fox hunt. So unreal, and so high and so pure... I don't think she believed it either. But the whole thing is about morals...?

JACK: Well, the play's trying to make us see everything in two ways. First of all it seems pretty clear that we don't know what's happened, probably nothing. The father seems to dramatize the terror of any guilt, justified or not. He loves his daughter and hates himself. But if the father is saying that the mere idea of something he'd call illicit love is terrifying, the girl dramatizes actual adultery as as innocent, good, powerful, beautiful, and so on. And of course she does love her father. In trying to win each other's love, they both hurt each other. It's simply an effort to dramatize the pathos, beauty, pleasure and terror of a love that's both real and unreal at the same time.

* * *

SHELLEY: Well, I was talking about this play not as a conversation in contrast to a drama, but rather as a drama opposed to a novel. In other words, it might be something to be heard, maybe, but not performed.

JACK: If it's to be heard aloud it's still a dramatic form. But you're saying that if _The Questions_ were a novel or a story, it wouldn't be very different?

SHELLEY: I'm saying it would not be _that_ different.

(_Long silence_)

ELAINE: Well, a lot showed up. What about everything that showed up on the actors' faces, and the power of the mood that was created between them?

DOUG: It seems the actors are asking questions relating the various images -- the tryst, the fox hunt. They're asking questions and searching.... And we're the audience in there too. We have the diverse images and roles and questions, we're involved in this drama of the questioning and the emotions involved. It wouldn't be the same in a story.

ZEESE: For me, this idea of not naming the man as father or not naming him as psychiatrist made the play thoroughly frightening. Because it seems that all these values you're talking about are relative, and had you said, "All right," at the beginning of the play, "this is a scene between a father and his daughter," then we could've taken this as purely psychological -- what Jim's talking about, an Electra complex situation. But the fact that you're never sure keeps all these ideas in a constant tension and a constant flux, and these changes of roles of the father is what was to me thoroughly frightening because you never have an outside standard to measuring the answers they give. Each question raises a deeper question. To me, one of the roles you neglected to mention is that the man becomes like the interrogator that you had in your in-class writing thing of last week, who was almost inhuman. He was asking a question which he didn't want answered.

JACK: In-class interrogator?

ZEESE: When you wrote on the rain you were talking about a warden who was prying into secrets for no reason. At times this man approaches that idea for me, and at other times his self-incriminations weren't those merely of a man accusing himself. When he asks if he had thought for one minutes of what they might have been doing while he was taking the scones out of the oven, well -- had he been the father, he would have known the answer. So he was wondering whether or not he thought that, or he was trying to find out. And this is a terrible relativity.

JACK: But it does have a kind of humorous pathos to it, doesn't it?

ZEESE: It may sound like humorous pathos, but it was frightening to me.

JACK: The play is supposed to be filled with absurdity. A lot of the scenes don't make immediate sense. To me the play is terrifying, but also very funny, awfully funny. (_Laughter of class_). I thought the television production would be a little more amusing. Well, the important thing, I think, is the idea of dramatic action....

During the second part of the class we worked with _Member of the Wedding_. Here the discussion was spiritless and at times hostile. Perhaps the class was tired from the discussion of _The Questions_ -- whatever the reason, Jack and I couldn't generate any real excitement. We worked with the ideas of loneliness and of the tragic quality of Bernice's loneliness in the play. Images of seeing and the unresolved music which the play is filled with. Some people thought John Henry's death was contrived -- We talked of him as a version of Frankie's childhood, and of the fatality inherent in his purity, but all this was sluggish and didn't seem important to the class. However, Jack and I thought the discussion of The Questions suggested that students could react well to a single television viewing and that it probably prepared them for a better reading of the text when we get to it.

April 17

Full meeting. Visitors: John Hersey, Benson Snyder (Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Medical Department, M.I.T.), Mark Mirsky, Johnie Scott, Mitch Goodman. We passed out an anthology of tall tales written by our students, as well as "An Ugly Man" of April 4-5, which was used as a model. We referred to this tale from time to time, mostly repeated what we'd said about the theme of metamorphosis, the language transformations (adjective becomes a noun, which becomes a verb), and about the "building" effect of the tale. We began with Shelley's "A Human Dog."

A Human Dog

"How's your new dog, Arnie?"

"Just great, Hank. You wouldn't believe it; he's so smart. I swear he's like a human being. We talk to him and he understands every word."

"That's no big thing," said another boy standing in the same circle. "I had a friend whose dog was so human they used to call him up so he wouldn't get lonely. I just went to his funeral a couple of days ago."

"Well, we used to have a dog who was so human he liked the postman."

"I can see you guys haven't been around much," said a tall boy, jamming his hands into his pockets. "Didn't you hear about Barney Randall's dog? They have to tie him up when the postman comes or he'll read all their mail. He brings in the morning paper untied and folded flat and a little wet 'cause he reads it first out on the lawn."

"I can believe it," Curley Thompson put in. "I knew a couple who didn't find out 'til he started grade school why their son couldn't talk and had a tail."

"Oh, big deal. I knew a collie so human he could talk. He used to make anonymous threatening phone calls to all the neighbor ladies he hated, and when the cops finally traced them, his owner had to take the rap."

"You think that's something?" growled one boy. "Why, I could do that the first week out of Obedience School."

--Shelley Surpin

Here we found the idea of metamorphosis, as well as the "building" idea -- the dogs becoming progressively more absurd. Mark talked of the marvelous economy of the last line, where one of the boys actually claims he is a dog: the functions of tale-teller and object were all at once combined. I felt the language was not entirely convincing as boys' language, and that this injured the story as tall tale -- but Jack thought the form of this piece and even the language was modeled closely on "Ugly Man," and Mitch felt the story didn't have to spring from a realistically treated milieu to be a tall tale -- that the language wasn't as important as the story. Here we asked Mark to read "An Ugly Man" as a test of how important authentic voice might be. He read beautifully -- giving each speaker a voice. Jack pointed out that only Clifford Ulmer really seemed to "justify" or determine Mark's reading, seemed to have a distinguishable personality (and Mark talked of regional dialect as being pretty much un-variable, resisting individual voice). But still I think it was pretty evident that the whole spirit of the tall tale is in the language, and that that language has to be real. Kathy Arbuckle's piece was read next:

John Henry

> It was colder than snow weather, and our small plains town seemed darker than any shadow cast by the night.
>
> Ma and Pa were in the kitchen drinking hot black water and sitting facing each other at the table. I was supposed to be asleep, but the slow pounding of the wind made me sleepless. Ma and Pa were terrible upset over John Henry, and they were going to awful pains wondering where he was and what he was doing. But I knew John Henry better than the both of them. Some people called John Henry dirty, but he was a good brother. Still, I knew it was true what he did at night away from me and Ma and Pa.
>
> Girls like John Henry so much that they fall lovesick for days, and the doctor sends them to bed for rest and quiet. I remember when Mary Ann's face just shriveled up and seemed to fade away from between her ears, for John Henry has a powerful kiss, and he isn't known to be wasteful. All girls turn red and feel weak when they see John Henry, but if John Henry touches a girl's hand or strokes their hair, their palms turn to clay, their hair loses its curl, and more than often, they develop a rash over their whole body. Mary Jane came close to death last year, and her ma took her away from town to cure her. And poor Mary Ellen just cried when John Henry left her until her eyes were so swollen that they wouldn't open, and she became blind. Once I asked John Henry to explain to me how he does it, but he just said: "Mary Sue, you're yet too cleverly clear."
>
> --Kathy Arbuckle

Here discussion centered around opening of the last line (Mary Sue asks her brother to explain his great powers of sexual attraction) and he answers "Mary Sue, you're yet too cleverly clear.") George Schmitten said he felt this meant "cleverly pure" and we talked about Mary Sue as being perhaps a representative of one of those pure but knowing children -- a girl similar to the heroine of Jack's play The Questions. The next question was whether or not this was a tall tale. Mitch said no, that it was finally too probable. We talked of the exaggeration as being rooted in Mary Sue's naive misinterpretation of certain facts of nature. "Mary Jane came close to death last year and her ma took her away from town to cure her." Jack raised the possibility of incest -- Kathy admitted it as a possibility, seemed to like the idea. Mark felt the tale was more Gothic than tall (and this goes well with the incest idea); talked about the first line and the "hot black-water" of the next -- does this have to be merely a euphemism for coffee? Something more sinister? The full discussion was as follows:

ELAINE: I didn't understand the last line.

JACK: Anybody understand that last line?

GEORGE: Unless it's "pure" --

JACK: What?

GEORGE: Unless it's "pure."

JACK: You're trying to say that "clear" means "pure"? (Long silence)

GEORGE: Well, I just said that because even if it means you're too pure, I still don't get it.

ELAINE: If she was too pure, she wouldn't understand it whether he explained it or not.

JACK: Helene, what do you make out of "cleverly clear"?

HELENE: "Mary Sue, you're just too cleverly clear" -- it could be taken two ways. It could mean that she was so innocent that he didn't want to corrupt her with his methods (Laughter) -- or else that --

JACK: Yes, I think that's a good idea. Beautiful -- Or else what?

HELENE: Well, the first time I read it, I thought that "clear" meant that she understood -- that she was clever and clear, or something like that.

JACK: You mean that he's saying that she understands so well that he's not going to answer the question?

HELENE: That's right.

JACK: I confess that when I first read this piece and got to "But I knew John Henry better than the both of them," and I like "the both" -- "and I knew that he was a good brother," the thought of incest crossed my mind. (Laughter) But

I suppose Kathy didn't really mean to suggest this idea --

GEORGE: I doubt it. (Laughter)

JACK: At any rate, I'm not totally satisfied with Helene's first explanation -- that he doesn't want to corrupt her by telling her about his powers.

JIM W.: Well, just from the tale, this guy was so powerful that I assume he wasn't just any normal individual. You know, you gotta have some kind of magic potion or a talisman, or you know, somebody put a curse on him or something and I can't see any normal powers doing all this. I guess that's why I'm not happy with it.

MARJORIE: But, that's the point of a tall tale. It's not supposed to be ordinary, or just anything that anybody does.

SHELLEY: Well, I can't quite accept it as a tall tale. Her innocence seems to come out so much, especially in that sentence "Mary Jane came close to death last year, and her ma took her away from town to cure her." That seems to me to reflect on the whole passage. In other words, it's not a tall tale because it's not really true, it's just her innocent way of seeing her brother's activities. Maybe she's talked to some of the girls who've had to do with her brother, and they've sort of "ooohed and ahhhed" and described him in terms that are exaggerated, but they know it's not true, and so she's sort of reporting what they've said --

JACK: Oh, you're doubting the narrator. You're doubting her truthfulness.

GEORGE: Her ability to see truth.

MARK: I would throw in a definition of a tall tale here. The tall tale has nothing to do with the question of truth. The problem of whether a narrator believes what he says or not is what distinguishes folklore from a kind of literary contrivance. But there is an element of joshing in the tall tale that seems to be missing here. For instance, the descriptions of John Henry are not tall tales. The exaggerations are there for a different reason, depending on who's telling the story. I think the most exciting variants are the ones about the tremendous desire for Negro dignity and heroism. There's a wonderful story of Bill Kelley's (William Melvin Kelley) in which he talks about the John Henry legend in that way. But in the tall tale there's joshing, the "Ugly Man" is a kind of joshing, in the Yankee tall tale there's an element of elbow in your ribs, a teasing.

JACK: But doesn't one tall tale tell us either that we share something in common, some secret that gives us power, or else that life is a great deal more drab and flat than we'd like it to be, so that perhaps the tall tale is actually a way of coping with drabness? I'm not too sure what this "joshing" means.

ZEESE: We've gotten a picture of this girl as being innocent, so innocent that she has strange explanations for quite natural things. (To Mark) You read her to be really quite a clever girl who is sort of caught in our life here --

MARK: No, not at all. I see here kind of a Gothic tale of a small plains town, that I'd like to see expanded as that. There are the elements of folklore in it, which are marvelous. There's even a Dracula figure in it. But it's not a folk tale, even though these elements of the folktale are there. "It was colder than snow and the small plains town seemed darker than any shadow cast by the night." Now, I'm ready for a Gothic tale. And the folktale does branch into the horror tale, and the distinction between the two is often hazy. But the piece is Gothic rather than tall tale: the girl's fascination with her brother is, as you say -- there are elements of incest there.

MITCHELL: It's not a tall tale in another sense, in that it doesn't strike me as so tall. John Henry could well do all these things to girls. I know a man who could do things like that to girls. He's been doing it all his life. (Much laughter) I can't testify to the body rash, but every other effect there, this man has accomplished. And the hair coming uncurled, it's all perfectly possible. (Laughter and groans) Well, not in the most literal sense, but I think the piece is expressing a powerful effect -- and Mary Sue is not so innocent, either. She knows that he's got a powerful kiss and is not known to be wasteful. (Laughter)

DOUGLAS: But at the same time, she talks about hot black water.

JACK: That's right -- what does she mean?

CLASS: Coffee!

JACK: Okay, so we have to work with the difference between naivete, ignorance, innocence -- and everything she seems to know.

ELAINE: I just don't understand that hot black water. I understand that it probably means coffee, but you don't have to be sophisticated to know about coffee. Calling it "hot black water" is no indication of innocence.

JIM W.: It's hot water that's sort of dark.

(Laughter)

ELAINE: Just describing it that way -- she knows perfectly well it's called coffee (emphatically), but to her it's hot black water. You know maybe she's afraid of it.

MITCH: Hot black water is what John Henry's got in his veins. That way it's interesting -- and maybe in ways not intended.

JACK: Okay, but the purity of the "cleverly clear," the ring of it, is lovely in terms of all she seems to know about John Henry's powers. Can you say anything more about "cleverly clear," Kathy? It sounds as if those two words are substitutions for others.

KATHY: I don't know. I agree with you about the substitution, and also that the two words are somehow set off.

JACK: I see this whole piece as a vehicle for "cleverly clear." And for me the phrase suggests mountain dialect or something out of an Elizabethan lyric. The phrase is really the sound of innocence --

Jim Kilgore read last, and his fine piece, "The Holy Water" was an excellent example of the progress he has made this year.

The Holy Water

I remember we'd run out of whiskey, and all of Mrs. Johnston's glasses were dirty or broken, but she just smiled like a happy child and pulled out a stack of paper cups from the cupboard over the kitchen sink. I stood beside her and Warner leaning over the sink and put ice in the paper cups as Warner poured in the Sherry, wine, or whatever it was.

Warner mixed the last drink and turned slowly towards me, pivoting on his feet like the trunk of a large toppling tree. His blinking eyes were as pink as the curtains drawn shut across the window behind the sink. He looked down at the filled cups, grabbed one and poured the drink down his throat. I took a small sip from the cup nearest me. Warner filled his cup again and started to mumble something about the Easter water. I couldn't hear him; Francis and Rolly were dancing around the kitchen looking for their drinks while Sonny and Biddy played the guitars for the crowd in the living room. Warner finished another drink and moved towards me, reaching for the bottle just as Francis tried to take it for himself. Warner then grabbed my wrist with his free hand. "We'll go get th'Easter water now," he hollered, and then pointed a shaky finger at Rolly and Francis. "Here," they'll tell you --- the Easter water's holy. Hurry up now" (He released my arm). "Go get your coat and we'll go. We'll see the sun dance after."

We were all in my car as I next remember. Sonny had brought along his guitar to play a tune, a Polka he said, for the sun to dance to. Somehow we arrived a few minutes before sunrise at a stream near Francis' place. Everyone rushed out into the grey with empty liquor bottles. Some one handed me a milk bottle, and I followed behind Warner who floated and tumbled towards the stream. He didn't fall but kept going until his ankles and then his knees were immersed in Holy water. Warner filled his two wine bottles and drank. The others were drinking the Holy and they yelled to me to hurry up before it was too late. I lowered my bottle into the stream and then lifted it up again. I shouted at Warner, grabbed one of his wine bottles and threw mine, filled with whiteness, back to the cow's tit.

--Jim Kilgore

The class was confused by this piece, but liked it. Mitch and Jack talked of it as archetypal -- Jack saying here "wine and milk, the two life-giving liquids are polarized" -- Mitch: "It represents ecstasy, a process of literal weaning." Jack spoke of the metamorphosis of river into corn, and of the throwing of the bottle as being in fact a positive gesture, an affirmation. Jim's own view was considerably less complex; he saw the narrator as a milktoast merely trying to be "one of the gang" and being angry that while the river yields liquor to his friends it gives him only milk. Benson Snyder talked of the piece as creating a "dream language" -- and of the personal logic of dreams. Johnie Scott was also on this track, telling of hallucination as opposed to (escape from) "the gray" of the morning:

JOHNIE: Well, the thing is, to me, this last paragraph is almost or could be seen as hallucination in a sense, a dream. This fellow is, you know, being pressed, as you brought out, and he's always on the fringes of the crowd. They're saying, "Come on, come on," he's fumbling, he's dropping these things, he's trying to go, but he's trying to stay there -- and all the time life is going on. And then just those words, those metaphors, you know, filled with whiteness --

JACK: Yes, what's happened to the river? I'm just struck with the horrible thought that maybe nothing's happened to it, maybe it doesn't exist. Or is it too obvious?

MARJORIE: You mean, that it's become holy?

GEORGE: Become white?

JACK: Well, that it's milk, that it is milk. Is this clear? Do we all agree that this is a river of milk? Sort of like "skim ugly"? Francie, you don't agree that it's a river of milk?

FRANCIE: Well, I thought maybe the bottle had something -- I mean, they filled their wine bottles, and obviously I made the inference that if they filled their wine bottles up, there's wine inside; so he takes his milk bottle and fills it up, and there's milk inside.

JACK: But it's from the river.

GEORGE: It appears to me that if you have a wine bottle, it's wine --

(Many voices debating wine, milk, scotch)

CYNTHIA: Will you please have him talk about it?

JIM W.: The defense calls it. (Laughter)

JIM KILGORE: The images here are of getting partially drunk, you know, and of getting into things and everybody's rushing out into the grey. And I was suddenly thinking of a milk bottle. Then, you know, I'm sort of joining in the party, and everything is marvellous for me at this point. Then I'm sort of disgusted; I don't really recognize at this point what's going on -- I just see this whiteness, I chuck it back. It's just sort of a whole stream of transformations. I hadn't tried to develop what you had, that the river of water itself was a river of milk.

JACK: It isn't so much that the river is a river of milk or becomes milk. It's that the river becomes a cow. Cow's tit, (Jack and Johnie in unison) -- that's what it is, I mean, the river has turned into an animal -- that is, the source of all life. Ben, is that river becoming a cow's tit, or isn't it?

BEN: I was still not clear, what he had in mind, what he was intending -- What was your intent?

JIM K.: It's almost like a drunken dream, you know.

CYNTHIA: Is it actually a milk bottle?

JIM K.: Yes.

CYNTHIA: Where do you get the milk?

JIM K.: Just by dipping the bottle into the river.

CYNTHIA: Okay, and the other people got wine? And then he got milk?

JIM: Yes.

MITCH: Well, I think that this is a very accurate view of it then, for this is sort of a visionary business and it's moving toward a final magic. What you've got is a logic that's magical in the end, and you've got to accept it as magical. If you take it too literally, then it falls apart, but as Jack suggested, the energy there, the movement, is very fine, it's very active. It really keeps driving toward that vision.

STEVE: How can you call this a tall tale, though? I mean, why is it a tall tale? It's like this guy's having a nightmare that he can't be accepted by anyone. And at the end he isn't either, when he dips his milk bottle and it comes out different than anybody else's. You know, he can never be the same as anybody else. It's like something out of "Twilight Zone." I don't see how it's a tall tale.

JACK: I don't see how it's like anything on "Twilight Zone," Steve. I've never see "Twilight Zone," but (laughter) I have an idea, and it seems to me that the materials here are extremely primitive. This is a ritualistic experience in which a young man gets initiated into something, and at the same time, you know, fights it, and ends up with a terrific resistance. But the moment he resists -- I took it as flinging back the source of life to the giver of life, a kind of propitiation -- he comes enormously alive, in that gesture of flinging the bottle. We have milk and wine polarized, but they're both a kind of live-giving, spirit-giving fluid or substance. And to me it's enormously exciting to see --

CYNTHIA: Are you interpreting this unconsciously or consciously? (Laughter) Are you saying that's what he's doing, or -- ?

JACK: I'm saying that he's come up with some archetypal materials. I'm saying that I see them in here, so whose unconsciousness you're talking about may be a question. I think that Jim has uncovered some rich materials -- I don't know exactly how conscious he is of life drives and life fears, but some powerful ones seem to be here.

MITCH: Sure, here's this person trying to break out of an uninitiated state into ecstasy. The others are in ecstasy, and he wants to arrive there. I mean you people with all your LSD ought to know about this. (Laughter) No, but seriously, people of your generation are so impatient for ecstasy or some such experience, some revelation. Some of you feel there's got to be a quick way to it, and this has a parallel logic, really. I mean it's understandable in those terms.

SHELLEY: Well, in those terms, how do you see the ending? Do you see the ending as -- I don't know -- getting in with the other guys or that he's thrusting back the milk?

MITCH: No, it's tentative, but he has the hope that the other guys are on to something, that they seem to be getting what they need to attain this state.

BEN: It's as if they've been reborn.

SHELLEY: Well, I tended to see it as if this last sentence was a sort of progression. In other words, he was going to sort of now get in with it, because he throws this milk bottle back, and he grabs at one of the wine bottles that belongs to a woman, whereas always before Warner's grabbed his arm and has dragged him along. And now he's abandoning that role.

JACK: He's no longer passive, but active. So the question is whether or not the final act of flinging his own milk bottle back to the cow's tit is negative or somehow positive. And I would only say that for this speaker to use the phrase "cow's tit" is in itself very positive. He may be resisting, rejecting or sloughing off his old self, and there may be anger in the gesture, and he may think of milk bottles and milk as infantile and part of a weakness that he's throwing away, so he expresses rage and means to level rage at the old cow --

MITCH: No, he hasn't had enough. He hasn't even begun.

JACK: But now that he has that phrase in his mouth, maybe he can go on from there.

BEN: The one thing that struck me is that it seems to have the logic of a dream with its condensation and fusion -- and I thought more in those terms than in archetypal, the symbols literally meaning this or that. But it certainly captures that -- the voice is certainly that of the dream. And in that sense it builds, it's like taking as your problem: how do you dream a tall tale?

JIM K.: In some way the guy's not realizing what's going on because he's in it, you know. But that's what I was trying to get at: a hazy picture.

BEN: Yes, that's what I heard from it.

MITCH: That slight haziness is really very good --

BEN: And it's a very interesting problem, I think: how do you capture the voice of a dream? Some people dream in color and some people don't and some people have a great deal of movement and other's don't. Jim's tale comes through as a consistent, not stereotypical, description of a dream. So I think the phrase you keep using is "it works." It did for me.

MITCH: It's a very considerable achievement, to make confusion happen like that, to really make it happen in the words. He doesn't say, you know, "They were confused, they were fogged, they were distant"; he lets it happen, and that's really damned good.

JACK: Jim also read this with something of a southern accent, it seemed to me, which is interesting. He's found a new writing voice and used a speaking voice appropriate to it.

We listened to the tape of "The Jeweler's Brag," a piece of authentic American folklore collected by Renton Rolph, one of Mark's students, in an East

Palo Alto junk yard, and after a brief discussion Jack pointed out that all of the tall tales had to do with either "exposing or defending some kind of deeply human value."

The Jeweler's Brag and the Cooper's Defense

> Well, anyhow, the jeweler and the cooper got together, you know. So, ah, the jeweler began to brag, you know. Had a few to drink, you braaag. I don't care what line you run, you brag. If you're a boilermaker, you all go in there and ah feelin' good, ah, you find the truth out too, you know, see.
>
> You brag.
>
> yeah, braaaag. That's one a the number ones. So this jeweler started in to brag. He says, you know, he says, "George," that was my father's name, you know, he says, "My work has got to be to a hair." And, ahhha, my Dad was a man never said very much, you know. But he'd just store up his powder, you know, an' pick up the points a what you said, see, because he always figured -- I could use that 'gainst you -- see. And of course if you want to be a big damn liar and lie out of it, aaahhh well, that's a different thing but your conscience'll hurt you afterads if you're good friends, see. Well, so, he got done with his story. The cooper, my Dad, he says, "Well, that's nothin'. Up to a hair?" he says.
>
> "Up to a hair."
>
> "Yeah, see this joint here on my bar, if I could push a hair through there, the barrel would leak. It wouldn't be worth a damn."
>
> That's true too.

After class we talked briefly with John Hersey about Hiroshima, which we'd all read. Jim Wright asked him if he intended the book to have a moral. John Hersey answered that he hoped it did, and spoke of journalism as a process of selection: "There is no such thing as 'objective' journalism." We compared his method to Capote's in In Cold Blood. Mr. Hersey felt he ordered Hiroshima along principles close to those of the novel, while Capote was in fact, distorting his materials to make a novel. Jack talked of the purity of Mr. Hersey's journalism and compared it to Capote's "poetic" use of language and materials. Mr. Hersey said he felt it was absolutely crucial that the reader know Hiroshima was not a fiction, and spoke of his problem of dealing with the horror of the H bomb. He felt too much horror would merely disgust the reader and force him into not accepting the reality of the event. The class listened seriously and asked questions. They were impressed by Mr. Hersey's modesty -- and by the power of the book -- Excellent day.

April 23

Large group meeting. We began class by discussing Mr. Hersey's visit. Jim W. was in a contentious mood and said he wasn't convinced by *Hiroshima*"S argument against the H bomb. The class began a maddeningly logical consideration of justification for dropping the bomb. Only a few students -- Shelley most effectively -- spoke against the whole feeling of this "logical" argument.

We next turned to Greg Psaltis' work on his 2S deferment, which consisted of the original paper and three papers which developed out of that. The class was given the following excerpt from the original paper:

> Why should I lose my 2-S draft deferment? Should I really be put on an equal basis with school dropouts who are digging ditches or collecting garbage for $1.25 an hour? I certainly don't think so...
>
> How do I merit this 2-S deferment? I'm a full time college student. I'm trying to prepare myself for a useful, productive life for the good of my fellow man. I'm presently studying to get a solid background for when I apply to dental schools. If admitted to a dental school, and if I graduate from it, I would be able to go out into the world and help people by putting my knowledge to use for their benefit. All this, of course, depends on whether or not I can get through my undergraduate studies without being interrupted. I feel I am prepared to meet anything that may prove to be a barrier to my staying in school. I am confident that I can continue to afford to stay in school as well as accept and respond to the academic pressures of college. The only barrier that I am powerless to is the draft. The government, recognizing the importance of education, gave 2-S deferments to students up to now. But now a program is being considered whereby no 2-S deferments would be given any more. Where would that put me? It would put me on an equal basis with every other 18 year old male in this country. So if I were to get my notice from the government, there would be nothing I could do, but drop out of school and go to Viet Nam.
>
> --Greg Psaltis
> (Feb. 13, 1967)

(Some of Jack's marginal comments:

The cliche lofty voice -- "productive life for the good of my fellow man" -- makes me doubt what you say. But as speaker, what's your relation to your "fellow man"?

These spoken cliches -- "solid background," "to go out into the world" -- result in voicelessness or suggest an unfeeling speech-maker or the anonymity of someone thoroughly identified with a job of petty authority?

How can you compare two such vastly different voices as "I am confident that I can continue," etc., and "Where would that put me?" This latter "voice" raises several problems, but this question makes clear one larger problem of the essay so far -- You create the wrong kind of conflict between personal concern and matters of social (or national) importance.

Let's talk about two possible revisions: 1) a closer look at your idea -- the drafting of college students; 2) an emotional reaction to dropouts -- do you know what a dropout is? -- or to your non-college friends. Try to create the person you resent being equated with...)

"Should I really be put on an equal basis with school dropouts who are digging ditches or collecting garbage for $1.25 an hour?" Jim liked this passage -- he felt it was honest, but objected to Greg's argument about his "usefulness" to society as a student dentist. The class as a whole (the men) seemed to buy this argument about social utility but merely objected to Greg's atrociously forensic way of putting it. Here began a long argument on the draft. Only Shelley and Kim (who got angry) and Paul (who got angry and whose anger struck me as making sense for the first time this quarter) and to some extent Cindy, Cynthia and Dale Rettig seemed to see through the smugness of most of the pro-draft deferment arguments, seemed to realize that what ultimately was being measured wasn't convenience or social utility, but the value of human life. Jack was amazed at the overall dullness and smugness of the class. I wasn't amazed, merely angered -- I suppose I prefer to overlook this kind of blindness. One good moment: the arrival, in the middle of this hot argument, of Carlos Ryerson, absurd in some kind of military uniform.

SHELLEY: Hold on, you guys -- In 1984, I don't know how many of you have read it, but Orwell invents this language called "Newspeak," and in Newspeak equal comes to mean same, and people can't at all comprehend that all people are equal, because that would mean, say, that all people have blue eyes and blond hair, and that's a meaningless statement, so therefore they have to completely reject it. But we, I hope, don't talk Newspeak, so the phrase "all people are equal" doesn't have to mean "all people are the same." And I don't think that our society's based on the concept that all people are the same, but I think it's supposed to be based on the concept that as human beings they have certain rights and abilities -- that are equal to everyone. It seems to me that this first little paragraph here about deferment and digging ditches and collecting garbage is just dripping with contempt.... You could have put it another way.

GEORGE: You could have said he was an artist or painter, creative.

JACK: Greg, do you really feel superior to the man who collects garbage?

GREG: Depends on the individual. I think -- to a certain extent we have to say yes.

DOUGLAS: Go ahead and be a hypocrite and say you don't feel superior! When you see somebody, I mean, you say I'm really thankful that I am what I am, and I'm not that. And that's feeling superior.

JIM: You always look down on trashmen, on garbage collectors.

GREG: I'm not being discriminating. I'm not saying I'm being discriminating.

JACK: You think not?

GREG: I'm just saying that I'm glad that I'm not him.

PAUL: You're saying you're glad that you don't have his job. In other words, not that you're glad you're not him as a person. You're glad you don't have his job. Well, you're not discriminating against this garbage man, you're discriminating against the idea of having someone go out to collect garbage. You're just discriminating against his job, not the person.

GREG: Because I don't know the garbage man as a person.

PAUL: But you just said you did. You said you felt superior to the guy.

GREG: In the position that I'm in now.

DOUGLAS: How about the position: "I'm glad that I've developed my potentials more than he has"?

GREG: Yes, that's a possibility.

DOUGLAS: (To Jack) You must be glad you've developed your writing potentials more than any of us here, right? Any of us? (Laughter) Now wait a minute! That isn't irrelevant. That's very important.

JACK: Are writers "superior"?

DOUGLAS: We're talkig about development of potentials. We're not talking about superiority. We're not saying that men are dispensable at all.

GIRLS: Yes you are!

PAUL: You're still putting value judgments on people.

SHELLEY: You're saying, "Okay, since you collect garbage..."

PAUL: Right, "You people go to Vietnam."

SHELLEY: Right, "You're dispensable..."

PAUL: You say that's not value judgments? When you say one person has to go ahead of you because you're at Stanford, that's not making a value judgment on a person? (Much noise through all of this.)

DOUGLAS: Okay, that's a value judgment -- well -- what's the answer? Greg?

GREG: Don't ask me for answers....

SHELLEY: (Everyone talking at once) As far as the draft goes, you should be put on an equal basis with the people who aren't in college.

DOUGLAS: I'm beginning to feel that way too.

JIM: What about girls? Should they be drafted too?

PAUL: Yes, why not? (Laughter)

And yet the argument, painful and futile as it was, seemed to help the students when we turned back to Greg's prose. Jack had begun working with the draft paper by getting Greg to write about the dropout to whom Greg felt he was being equaled.

> Hair slicked back and a cigarette hanging out of the corner of his mouth, a school dropout leans against the wall flipping a quarter waiting for another customer to come and buy some gas. One pulls in and is met with an arrogant, "What do you want -- ethyl?" As the gas is being pumped, the slovely figure drags himself around the car cleaning the windows haphazardly. The windows are just as bad as before he started. It is typical of the type of work he has always done. While he was in school his work usually wasn't even done, though. He was just there for the ride, not caring at all about assignments. His immediate goal was to identify with all the other degenerates of the school and be one of the cool guys who got congratulatory slaps on the back for telling the most disgusting and filthy jokes. He had to dash out to the parking lot after school each day and light up his cigarette and go speeding off in a souped up car without a muffler. Usually he'd go over to one of his buddy's houses to have a beer or something. That was being cool. He didn't identify with the school at all except that it gave him a chance to meet with all his friends so they could carry on their various activities. He loved causing a commotion in class, so that he could attract all the attention and cause the teacher to get upset. What a kick it must have been to hinder everyone else's efforts to get an education. So now that high school is over and he has discovered that no college will accept him, he is suddenly isolated from all his cool companions and he only has a gas pump to play with. The people he tries to impress are customers and most of them are appalled. He presents a highly undesirable figure now, just as he did before he left school.
>
> --Greg Psaltis
> (March 6, 1967)

(Some of Jack's marginal comments:

"Slovenly figure," "degenerates," "disgusting" are further examples of your lofty moralizing voice? Many readers would resist such moralizing strongly, it seems to me.

"Speeding off in a souped up car without a muffler" -- much better rhythms!

This page does begin to create the kind of person you resent -- though he's still a type, a cliche? -- and does begin to reveal your attitude toward him. However, the passive constructions and various underlined "voices" -- "carry on their various activities," "to get upset," "to hinder," "a highly undesirable figure" -- weaken the page and tend to alienate the reader. What has your moral "stance" to do with your real feelings? The sudden emergence of strong rhythms -- "speeding off in a souped up car" -- is extremely important. Let's talk about using that phrase in a taped revision.)

Students' reactions to this piece, and to the transcript and edited materials on the same subject, centered around two points: 1) that the dropout, as Greg created him, was unreal, a cliche, and 2) amazement at Greg's dislike of the dropout. (The students were surprised to learn that the dropout was an actual person -- an acquaintance of Greg's.)

GREG: This is a guy I knew. A real person... This is a typical person.

JACK: Can we reconcile "real" and "typical"?

GREG: I happen to know this guy. I made contact with him, through the school. I knew him. I knew what kind of guy he was, I actually had a chance to observe him. How else do you form an opinion on somebody?

JACK: "Contact," "through the school," "observe" -- Can't we hear this remoteness? We've been struggling with the problem of remote voice all day. But we'll go on. What "kind of a guy" was he?

GREG: What kind? Well, probably the most undesirable person I've ever met in my life. I know his background. Immediately everybody always thinks, "Oh the poor guy probably has bad parents." Well, he doesn't have bad parents. His father works at some store. He's not a gas station attendant or anything.

DOUGLAS: What does that mean? His parents could be garbage collectors and still have a great time.

JACK: We've had enough about garbage collectors. (Laughter) Is it really possible to relate "bad background" to different kinds of work?

GREG: I happen to know he comes from a very nice background. His father in fact was mayor, very active in the community. His father was also an alcoholic but nobody knew it.

JACK: Maybe that's important.

GREG: You said "Tell me about his background" -- what do you want to know about his background? I can't see it. What does background have to do with it? You want to know if he came out of the slums? No, he didn't.

CARLOS: No, it's in his family. What's the relation between his parents and him?

GREG: I haven't known him all my life, but apparently he hasn't been that bad off with his family. He has a couple of brothers who aren't this way....

SHELLEY: You noticed that he wanted attention -- You didn't say, "Well, he disturbed the class," just, "He wanted attention." It sounds as if you were saying he had some kind of a problem, as if you were going to be compassionate. In that place and also in the place where you're talking about the fact that he didn't identify with the school at all except that it gave him a chance to meet with all his friends so that they could carry on with the various activities -- there again it seems as if you're trying to understand him somehow. But then you just dismiss it. It seems like your observations don't go along with your whole attitude. ..... Why did you want to be so cool?

JACK: Why what, Shelley?

SHELLEY: Why did he want to be so cool? It seems to me that you say things right here. I mean, I've never met the boy. But you say things right in here that tell me somehow that you know he was an unhappy, lonely person. He wants to get slapped on the back and he wants to be with the in-group and he wants to get attention. And I get all of that out of what you've told me about him. And yet the tone -- the general tone -- of the paper is that you don't see what you yourself are doing to him --

Douglas wanted Greg to get his hate into concrete terms, he felt such words as "undesirable," "hinder," "appalled," "degenerate" were mere name-calling. George Schmitten felt a lack of concrete materials kept the reader from participating in hate for the dropout. A few students were aware of the real effect of name-calling and lack of detail -- that it led in fact to the reader sympathizing with "dropout" simply as a reaction against the writer's "lack of compassion." Shelley was brilliant here. Kim was still angry: "The worst thing about the dropout for you is his lack of sensitivity -- and yet your insensitivity to him is clear in the paper?

Working alone with Greg in an earlier session, Jack had used the line "and go speeding off in a souped up car without a muffler" as an exercise in sentence rhythm. He asked Greg to repeat the line over and over into a tape recorder, to play the recording back, and then to "talk" the same materials into the machine. The result was a description of the dropout in transcript, and Greg's edited version of the transcript.

> The potential school dropout comes shuffling down the hall, banging the lockers, causing a great commotion. When he finally arrives at class, he walks into the room, kicks over his desk and then strongarms a smaller student into picking it up for him. When he finally does sit down, he slouches in his desk and takes out a piece of gum that he begins chewing very loudly. The teacher finally enters the room and he throws a spit wad at her. She warns him once, but he takes no heed. He continues to make a commotion, usually by tapping his pencil on his desk or talking to his buddy next do --- in the next chair. The teacher tries to stop him, but he simply won't cooperate. He yells at her; he even cusses at her. At that point she orders him to the dean's office. He laughs at her, mockingly. He thinks it's great. He runs down the hall to the dean's office. On the way, he hits a monitor in the head -- great fun for him. He gets to the dean's office and the dean begins to talk to him, but he refuses to listen and talks back. The dean tells him he's expelled from the school for three days and he loves it. He walks out of the dean's

> office merrily and giving a wolf-whistle at the secretary on his way out. He goes home and he decides he'll come back as soon as school's over. When the school is out, he comes back to school and looks for trouble. He looks for fights; he loves fights, especially with kids smaller than him. He tries to find some freshmen or some other student that's smaller than him. He wants a fight -- he wants to hurt someone. When he does fight, he uses all sorts of tricks. He hits, kicks, knees and sometimes will even use weapons such as chains or something. He's finally happy when he actually draws blood. When he really hurts someone, hurts someone badly, he's happy.
>
> --Transcript of tape describing dropout (March 17, 1967)

> Banging lockers and poking kids, the potential dropout comes shuffling down the hall to class. Upon arrival there, he walks in, kicks his desk over and forces a smaller student to pick it up. When he finally sits, he slouches down and chews his gum too loudly. As the teacher walks in, the dropout takes aim and chucks a spit wad at her. He taps his pencil and talks to his buddies as class is about to start. The teacher tries to stop him, but he yells, then cusses at her. She orders him to the dean, but he just laughs, mocking her. He runs down the hall, punches a monitor and struts to the dean. The dean talks to him, but he just will not listen. Instead he would rather talk back. The dean suspends him and he leaves merrily, giving the secretary a wolf-whistle on the way. When school is out, he comes right back to get some action. He looks around to find some fights with smaller kids. He wants to fight so he can use his different tricks: he kicks and knees and uses chains to do the job. When someone's hurt, the dropout feels a sense of pride, for he has shown that he's the master.
>
> --Edited from transcript of same date

The class didn't feel Greg had succeeded in creating the dropout in the transcript: "This guy's so bad you don't hate him." And Cindy felt there was more voice in the transcript than in its edited form. But Carlos saw "power" in the last lines of the transcript -- the description of the dropout's bringing "blood" shocked him. And here we saw a moment when both Greg's hate for the dropout, and the figure of the dropout himself, began to be real. Douglas had earlier said: "You see no hate coming from dropout, hence you can't hate him." Jack pointed out that the edited version of the tape somehow returns to the iambic rhythm of the "souped up muffler" line -- a rhythm strangely lacking in the spoken version. Shelley now noticed the interesting business of the dropout's lacking a name, which further distanced and stereotyped him. Greg said (he didn't know how much he said), "If you give him a name the reader will feel close to him and he'll be more real. If you give him a name people will know some secret." An exhausting, interesting day.

May 2

Today we worked in a different way with Ballad of the Sad Cafe. We began by calling out spontaneously words which we either recalled from the book, or which evoked the book for us. Jack wrote these down on the blackboard while we wrote them in blue books. Next we selected from the list the words which really seemed to work: chant; gray/dim lights; snow; red dress; pig; tables; eyes; potion; plush parlor. Next we tried out groupings of these words. Here we came up with red/dress/dim lights/ whiskey/ perverse -- Cindy Fry was attempting to get at the "eerie quality of the story." Chant/ potion/ snow was more interesting. We pretty much left these groups without comment -- (perhaps a mistake) and moved to roles in the book, that is, the various roles Miss Amelia took. Here again we worked by free association. After the role words were all on the board, we again attempted to group them -- this time in terms of time: 1) Miss Amelia as she is before advent of Cousin Lyman, 2) while she is "blossoming" through her love for one year, 3) and after the return of Marvin Macy. As we began working in these groups the structure of the story began to become evident, for we were compelled to add role words to make a rough system of opposites and transformations. Then from doctor in the pre-Lyman stage we moved to witch doctor-magic healer in the blossoming period and finally to quack in the final stage. The groups:

pre-Lyman	"blossoming"	final stage
storekeeper	cook	liquidator
barber		victim
prosecutor		unsuccessful fighter
bootlegger	bartender	
doctor	witchdoctor	quack
"bride" - virgin	lover/mother/sister	hermit/old maid

From these groups we worked in two ways: 1) we talked about the analogous motion of the love careers of Marvin Macy and Cousin Lyman, the theme of unrequited love and the shifting roles of three main characters, and 2) we worked back toward the word clusters we'd begun with, telling of the "magic" in Miss Amelia's liquor and her healing, of the epiphanies in the book and their counterparts in The Member of the Wedding. We worked with the "Twelve Mortal Men" epilogue and compared its language to the language of the whiskey passage, finally talked of the ideas of decay, loneliness, and of the brutalizing "boredom" of the town -- of unfulfillment and also transcendent harmony in the chain gang's paradoxical music. Jack and I both felt this day went pretty well, except that the initial "free associations" came a little slow. (We felt this was due to the size of the group -- four students.)

May 8 - 18

The idea of these two weeks has been to work with pairs of students -- two pairs each day. Because of scheduling difficulties this wasn't always possible. In general the pairs worked better for me than for Jack -- or rather I liked working with two students only better than he did. My method was to have one student read a piece of his work and to get the other student to criticize it -- I was to stand by and act as prompter and moderator. Some students worked extremely well in this role of critic.

May 8. Paul Raymore did some good work on a piece by Marjorie concerning a Hungarian fellow she met in Germany.

> Peter and I were waiting at the Bahnhof in Essen, Germany for the train to Essen-Mugel, which was about a the minute walk from our adopted home. Peter was a 16-year-old Hungarian cousin of my German family, and, like me, he was visiting for the summer.... Peter was extremely proud of Hungary, and was reluctant to admit its shortcomings. He refused to listen to me when I tried to tell him that not all Americans are pleasure-loving cigar-smoking feet-on-the-desk "capitalists." Peter said he was not a Communist, yet I could see what influence Communist propaganda had had upon his young mind....
>
> --Marjorie Young
> (excerpt)

The Hungarian's aristocratic background and Communist ideals came into a rather complicated opposition when Marjorie inadvertently spoiled his chances to pick up a tip by carrying an old woman's luggage by saying he couldn't accept the money because he was a "Kavalier" -- " Gentleman":

> ...Soon I saw him carrying two large suitacases for an elderly lady. I ran over to him and followed him and the lady outside to the taxicab stop. Peter set the suitcases down. While the cab driver was loading them in the car, the woman took out a few coins from her tiny leather purse and tried to give them to Peter. He shook his head modestly and jerked his hand in a downward motion as if to say, "It was nothing." Then I said, "Er ist ein Kavalier!" (He is a gentleman). The woman

> smiled, shrugged her shoulders, climbed inside the cab and left. Peter looked at me angrily.
>
> "Why did you say that?"
>
> "Because you're a Kavalier."
>
> His face turned red and he punched his left palm with his right fist. He had really wanted the money.
>
> --Marjorie Young
> (excerpt)

At first I was concerned with Marjorie's condescension ("his young mind") and with the form of the piece -- and with some help from me, Paul was able to see how these several antagonisms in the boy's character appeared in the luggage scene. When we came to the passage on the train station, Paul began to emphasize yet another tension, the fact that this was a male/female relationship -- and his emphasis was important, for it suggested the essential weakness of Marjorie's piece:

> ... Think of these people -- spirits in bodies moving around, all in the same building, all different people with different memories imprinted upon their souls which make them what they are today. And for some reason they all happen to be in this building at this very moment and I am sitting here watching them. And thoughts are in my mind and their minds. Different thoughts. I wonder if even just one of them is thinking what I am thinking now. If I could talk to them, I wonder how many I would find who knew someone I knew or had some connection to me in the web that links person to person. An old woman smiles at me and passes by. I'll never see her again. So many come in and out of my life in a flux. And there are so many people in this world whom I will never see. There are so few people whom I'll ever know and even fewer whom I will touch...
>
> --Marjorie Young
> (excerpt)

Paul thought that this long soliloquy about human loneliness could only be understood by taking into account Marjorie's relationship with the boy -- this relationship perhaps being part of the source of Marjorie's loneliness but also having the potential of breaking through that loneliness. And yet this very possibility was what Marjorie took most pains to camouflage and evade, so that the boy didn't even appear in the passage, and the result was almost total abstraction. All this was interesting, and Paul worked well and was more at his ease, less defensive in this intimate group.

His piece -- a pretty confused and awkward attack on Member of the Wedding -- was more difficult to work with: his arguments -- except possibly one on the authenticity of Bernice's Negro dialect -- made so little sense that finally the only solution seemed to be to turn the piece into pure viciousness -- so we all rewrote a particularly vapid sentence and Paul really did make it quite bitter and sarcastic -- but because of the noise and the heat I was able to do little more with this idea.

Also today Jack met with Douglas Tom and Cynthia Ropes. This was a good session in which Doug was made (through the replay of taped readings, discussion and rewriting) aware of his defensive (and confusing) use of irony in the opening paragraph of his piece on Christianity:

> Once a man said to me, "Believe and you shall be saved!" And so I believed, but I wasn't saved. I think in his eyes I might have been, because he had confidence in his God, but my beliefs oscillated between confidence and doubt, until I finally realized I really did not believe and therefore could not be saved. The saturation point of my willingness to believe, however, was literally my salvation. In fact it was the question of salvation that made me wonder what I was being saved from, and consequently brought about my salvation in another sense -- I was saved from being "saved."
>
> --Douglas Tom

JACK: Can you believe Doug's first sentence, Cynthia?

CYNTHIA: I just don't think it happened.

JACK: I don't either.

CYNTHIA: I believe that that could be your interpretation of your upbringing, you know, childhood religious upbringing. And you're speaking as an adult now and looking back on it and saying, in effect, this was what was happening.

DOUG: Can't that man represent a collective body?

JACK: Did you mean him to?

DOUG: That's what I meant there.

JACK: But what's he actually representing? Cynthia, you're saying the man represents Doug's religious schooling as a child.

CYNTHIA: That's what it seems to be.

DOUG: That's pretty close. He represents, you know, a church, or everybody who has ever put forth that idea -- which would include the Sunday School.

JACK: Why do you begin with "Once a man said to me," which is a statement of fact and also suggests a parable?

DOUG: Because the central point was that statement right there -- "Believe and you will be saved."

JACK: You mean that rhetoric established the kind of language you wanted to use. But nobody ever actually made that statement to you -- right?

DOUG: Well, someone could have. You know, people have said that to me, or a man said that to me.

JACK: What kind of "speaker" could use such language?

DOUG: A preacher. I think I was really trying to make it sound like a preacher.

CYNTHIA: Why? Because you were trying to abstract it?

DOUG: It's heard often, you know, so that people would know that this man was talking about God or religion. It's just like writing the word "religion."

JACK: I don't think it is the same as writing "religion." But okay, let's write what we think this paragraph was meant to say.

(Cynthia, Douglas, and Jack write. Doug reads first)

DOUG: "I have been preached to -- Christian doctrine has played with my emotions, my thinking. For a time, I believed in it, but I had to force myself to believe in it. Looking back, I suppose this means I never did believe what it was saying. Consequently, I didn't accept the interpretations others were giving to it." Can you understand that any better?

CYNTHIA: That's much better.

JACK: The idea of being "preached to" or "preached at" is fine. Cynthia -- yours?

CYNTHIA: "I was conditioned by home and church, ministers and parents, everything in fact in my childhood, to believe in the doctrines of Christianity and its salvation. And being so conditioned, and an impressionable child, I did believe, until one day I realized that I wasn't being saved at all."

JACK: Good. We can hear your voice in those "see-saw" rhythms, Cynthia.

DOUG: That's really nice. It's not exactly what happened to me, but that would be a good interpretation of it.

JACK: I have two fumbling versions. "In my childhood I was instructed in Christianity, and believed what I was told. As a child I believed in God and thought that my belief saved me. Now, of course, I no longer think that my belief saved me at that time, and now I do not even believe in God." The second version is: "In my childhood I was taught to believe in God and to think that my belief brought me salvation in Christian terms. Now I do not believe in religious salvation." I think the problem with my first one is the "of course."

CYNTHIA: Yes. You're assuming we all share a lack of belief.

JACK: I notice a few stylistic "tics" that probably help to create my own nonfiction voice: "of course," the piling-up effect in the repetition of "now," the use of the "terms" (an ugly word I'm trying to avoid). My first passage makes me think of rhythmical insistence and my old Puritan authoritarianism; the second is a terse rhythmless failure. I prefer Cynthia's version to mine -- but doesn't Doug's revision express more conviction than either of ours?

CYNTHIA: It really does.

JACK: Read it again, Doug. Slowly.

(Doug reads)

JACK: For a moment let's go back to your original first sentence: "Once a man said to me, 'Believe and you shall be saved.'" What's the effect on the reader of that sentence? We expect the piece to continue in this parable-like fashion, but of course it doesn't. But aside from that, Cynthia, when you get to the end of this sentence, can you tell how you're affected by it?

CYNTHIA: I think I'm aware I've heard it before. Or something like it.

JACK: Okay. But I'm struck by two things. It seems to me that the second part of the sentence, "Believe and you shall be saved," could be spoken by at least two kinds of people: a minister, say, who stands before a congregation in some hallowed place and makes this rhetorical assertion, which could be taken seriously -- no matter your belief or lack of belief. But the phrase could also be spoken by one of Flannery O'Connor's wandering mad country preachers -- a fictional character harder for us to believe. Now if we turn to the first part of the sentence: "Once a man said to me" -- this man is not a minister, not a preacher, not insane, but is just a man, anybody, a generalization. And yet the "to me" is exact, direct, concrete. So just this part of the sentence creates incongruity in its shift from vagueness ("a man") to specificity ("to me"). But what about the second sentence: "And so I believed, but I wasn't saved."? (Silence) What about the "wasn't," the effect of the contraction?

CYNTHIA: I think it sounds flippant.

JACK: Sure. That casual contraction says a lot. The sudden change in voice -- the lapse from biblical rhetoric ("Believe and you shall be saved" is really an echo of "Ask and it shall be given unto you," isn't it?) The lapsing of all this to "wasn't" -- merely makes the subject seem less important. Maybe this "wasn't" relates to the last sentence here: "I was saved from being saved." Cynthia?

CYNTHIA: It's just more flippancy?

JACK: Why? What about "saved"?

CYNTHIA: Okay. "Saved" means "rescued from" and "being saved" -- means redemption of your soul. The first word is just practical. But it's made as important as the saving of somebody's soul. Is that what you mean?

JACK: So what do we call all this -- word play? double talk? Does another word beside "flippancy" come to mind? How about "irony"? This play on "saved" strikes me as gross irony, and it's irony we've been struggling with all this time. It's the same old problem, Doug -- your irony is the result of remoteness or lack of commitment; it makes what you say appear unconvincing, untrue. In other words, your irony is evasion. Let's hear your revision again.

(Doug reads)

JACK: What's the difference?

CYNTHIA: It sounds real, don't you think?

JACK: Yes. Because it expresses personal outrage -- you resent having been "preached" to. This is what you left out or disguised in your original statement. But let's play back your first reading and this time listen for the irony.....

May 11. In the other sessions this week I had to do too much of the work. But a session with Carlos and Dale was quite good. Carlos worked with Dale's piece of in-class writing from Cubberley on the pain of being hated -- experience in the Negro ghetto of Chicago and in Tiajuana:

> I feel despair very often -- but despair is often characterized as a middle class phenomenon, often caused by selfishness. Real, acute pain for me has come from hate.
>
> I've felt really hated only twice -- on the sidewalks of Chicago's south side, where I wished for the first time I could be black, just for a few minutes. And on the streets of Tiajuana, where people saw me as a rich gringo who had come down to ravish their daughters and sisters.
>
> Negroes speak of the hatred they see in the eyes of white men. I've seen the same hatred in the eyes of men standing in their storefronts, as a pimp began to drag me to his whore....
>
> --Dale Rettig

Here the focus was quite particular. We discussed the use of the perfect tense -- "I have seen the hatred in the eyes of men standing in their storefronts" -- rather than the simple past and heard the loss. Then we speculated on the various paradoxical meanings of the perfect -- its particularizing quality, always implying the specific (kept seeing, I often saw), its timelessness (I have seen, I am seeing, I will see). Finally I explained what I thought it meant in this sentence by recalling that "I have seen" came to mean "I know" in later Classical Greek -- the messenger scene in tragedy. Carlos made a very sharp observation on why the image of men standing in their storefronts is effective in this context -- (a pimp is dragging the narrator off as the men are watching) -- because it associates this kind of sex with "commerce" and the complicated irony of storekeeper and rich Gringo. I talked about the dream-like motion involved in the sharp "still photo" of the storekeepers against the violence of the "dragging."

May 16. One final good moment this week involved Douglas Tom and Cynthia Ropes again. Douglas wrote a fine piece on smoking marijuana:

> The high school texts, with their white, sterile analyses of marijuana repulse me--I have tried it and they have lied. I do not deny them the attempt to stop people from taking it, but because they have distorted the facts, I reject their efforts. I remember the films picturing forlorn, unshaven addicts in the dirty street against a brick wall and a grimy hand opening to reveal a few evil-looking, brown paper-wrapped cigarettes. They surround the pusher, shove handfuls of money

> at him to get the measly cigarettes, then escape to a dingy basement to smoke them. Their faces waver between silly grins and screwed contortions, conveying an emotion of pain and perverted pleasure. They are high, and my adolescent mind conceptualizes this as between very drunk and close to death....
>
> --Douglas Tom
> (excerpt)

Here we thought a kind of humor and irony worked to make the experience real: lovely passage about a movie shown to health class in high school with sinister pusher and boy "addicts" -- fine description of the effects -- making air balls, impeding the second hand of a clock:

> "How about air-balls?" asked Arnie, and so I tried. Cupping my hands half-closed, I felt the warm pocket of air in my hand. Sherry began to smile. I did the same with my other hand, then put my left over the right to make a giant air-ball that I heaved out the window with ecstatic recklessness. I stumbled over to the bunkbed, intending to get on the top, but Arnie began to talk me into being heavy. "You can't get up," he told me. "You're getting heavier, heavier." His voice was wild and cracking, filled with joy. I couldn't get up on the top and started to laugh. Five feet away, he pushed his hand toward the floor, telling me all the while how heavy I was until I began sinking to the floor. I felt the air on top of me and gravity had increased three times while I kept laughing....
>
> --Douglas Tom
> (excerpt)

But this humor was the ironic displacement between the actual and the suggested. A moment later the displacement became total transformation -- real hallucination -- as a lamp literally became an eyeball and a boy's hand turned into a flock of swans:

> This time, I was flying. The red light bulb was a stark pupil, staring out of the hollow, clear red cornea. Arnie began squeezing the eyeball and I thought it was being hurt and pleaded with him to stop but he lifted the lantern instead, causing the pupil to come out. I was so afraid the liquid would spill on me that I turned my head, squeezing my own eyeballs shut so the pupils would stay in. Arnie continued to entertain me. He crossed his hands like a bird and turned it into a swan that glided through the air as he moved his fingers. By squinting, I could see two, three, a flock! I watched them gliding through the air, over the green hills and the long, endless lake. They flew for days and then suddenly vanished as Arnie took his hand away.
>
> --Douglas Tom
> (excerpt)

Earlier, Cynthia had talked about the essay as being "literary." (Example: "The color prepared us like a darkened movie theater for a mysterious journey while I mentally anticipated the fantastic experience I would have.") But now Cynthia thought that these last two hallucinations were literary and unconvincing because they were so literal. I tried to suggest that these hallucinations were the experience Doug had had, and were powerful precisely because they produced true vision instead of something we could safely dismiss as "unreal." Cynthia wans't convinced, so we decided that Cynthia and I would write paragraphs on similar hallucinations an/ Doug would revise one of his passages. We concentrated on Doug's revision:

> This time I was flying. Looking up into the hole and seeing the red light bulb dazzled my eyes. It still didn't look like an eyeball, but I was willing to be convinced. Arnie kept talking, "Look at the eyeball! Look!" He laughed a laugh that was really quite insane but it made me laugh, too. I kept looking at the lantern until I saw an eyeball, glaring down at me with mock austerity. "The eye of God," I thought but dismissed it from my mind. The contrast between the light bulb and the black space of the hole seemed to destroy the image -- I squinted to make it cloudy and just then Arnie lifted the outside up, causing the light bulb to protrude. It looked like a pupil had popped out of the cornea and I yelled, delighted and yet feigning fear. Up and down went the bulb, in and out went the pupil -- I couldn't see how the eyeball could stand it without splitting up.
>
> --Douglas Tom
> (revision)

After playing over three or four times the original eyeball/swan passage, and comparing that reading with Doug's reading of the revision, Cynthia finally did begin to see that the tone (not voice) of this revision was closer to the buoyant almost frivolous tone of the earlier air-ball passage, but that the revision was lapsing into cliche ("dazzled my eyes"), that the eyeball was lapsing from concrete reality to idea ("the eye of God"), that such words and phrases as "seemed," "dismissed it from my mind," "protrude," "feigning" all weakened the passage or made the experience more remote, and that in general the loss of actual fear was obviously great. (I argued that "squeezing my eyeballs shut so that the pupils would stay in" was a lot stronger than "I couldn't see how the eyeball could stand it without splitting up." Cynthia did agree finally that Doug's revision tended to be abstract or diffuse in comparison with the original. But then Cynthia's own paragraph on feeling an "eyeball" (it turned out to be a peeled grape) at a childhood spook show was fine -- though unfortunately it tended to weaken my argument for the power of actual hallucination. But we did a lot of good thinking today. At least we finally agreed that Doug's flying "swans" were quite beautiful -- and admired the rhythms of the "swan" passage.

June 6

Last meeting -- full group. We began class by distributing three unidentified passages from critical pieces on Flannery O'Connor:

(1)

In most of her later writing she gave to the godless a force proportionate to the force it actually has: in episode after episode, as in the world, as in ourselves, it wins. We can all hear our disbelief, picked out of the air we breathe, when Hazel Motes says, "I'm going to preach there was no Fall because there was nothing to fall from and no Redemption because there was no Fall and no Judgment because there wasn't the first two. Nothing matters but that Jesus was a liar." And in whom is angst so dead that he never feels, as Hazel puts it: "Where you came from is gone, where you thought you were going to never was there, and where you are is no good unless you can get away from it."

--Robert Fitzgerald*

(2)

To understand the strange and terrible psychogenesis of the prophetic temperament, one must examine the artful reticulation of sacred and profane, rational and non-rational, demonic and divine elements that comprise it. And while every culture produces its unique variety of prophets, there are psychic and emotional similarities that transcend time and place, linking Balaam and Socrates, Buddha and Elijah, Mohammed and Isaiah, Jesus and Tarwater I in an easily identifiable fraternity of men dominated by some intensely personal vision of the holy. Flannery O'Connor in The Violent Bear It Away endeavors to record the psychological and social vicissitudes that attend the making of a young prophet in the Bible Belt of the American South. Utilizing only as much of Francis Marion Tarwater's first thirteen years as is necessary to give light to significant links in the narrative, Miss O'Connor focuses on the events of young Tarwater's fourteenth year--his year of decision and transformation.

--Roy Thomas**

(3)

Flannery O'Connor's prose style, with its deliberately halting rhythms, country syntax, curious and incisive figures of speech, is a comic equivalent of the temperament of her Southern Fundamentalist characters. In The Violent Bear It Away this prose style creates powerful sympathy for the fiery old prophet whom the boy Tarwater is trying to bury. It enlarges our capacities for believing in different kinds of reality, so that we move from seeing the old man as "mad" to seeing him as he has described himself in a few words scratched on the lid of his coffin: "MARSON TARWATER, WITH GOD."

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**Roy Thomas, "The Double as Teacher: A Prophet's Education in The Violent Bear It Away," (unpublished essay), p. 1.

--John Hawkes*

We read these pieces over silently, then listened to part of the tape made of Roy Thomas' talk on The Lime Twig last week. Then we attempted to decide which of the three pieces was written by Roy. It seemed pretty clear to me that the involved rhetoric and love for intimate, technical words of Roy's speaking voice was evident in his written work -- the second of the selections -- the first sentence "to understand the strange and terrible psychogenesis of the prophetic temperament, one must examine the artful reticulation..." etc., should have been a give-away, but the class felt the first (written by Robert Fitzgerald) was Roy's -- because of some largely superficial likenesses in vocabulary and because (I think) of the enthusiasm of the second paragraph. Only David Lam said the second was Roy's -- because of the complicated words and the "balance and parallelism which produce a strong and identifiable rhythm."

We concluded the class by reading the results of our final and perhaps most exciting assignment: Write a short statement (emotionally true, at least) that will shock your mother, Jack and Zeese, or your classmates. Some powerful statements here -- one student telling his mother he doesn't need her any more -- he makes it work because it's true. Another using (somewhat clumsily perhaps) visions of "black grinning men" in control of his body as a metaphor for terrible psychological pressures -- finally a long and serious piece by a girl about growing up -- about recognizing, in a very basic way, the insufficiency of good in the world, the hollowness of some good deeds and the ineffectiveness of others. A good class -- a somewhat frightening conclusion.

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SECTION 52. JEROME CHARYN AND ROBERT WESTON. LOG BY ROBERT WESTON

November 15

At the Tuesday staff meeting we talked about commenting on the paper of one of the students (Linda Hussey) in my section. My original reason for giving the paper to Jack was that I found the paper to be typical of a kind of writing which I personally find very difficult to comment constructively on. I hoped to get some insight or suggestions, particularly in relationship to the concept of Voice, on how to get at the problems of the paper. In conventional terms the writing was competent but dull. The staff generally agreed that the real problem lay in an ineffective mixture of voices. We distinguished three basic voices, which we called 1) a real adult voice, 2) an alien adult voice, 3) an artificial child voice. (Obviously, these terms have some value significance.) The general feeling was that the first "real adult voice," which emerged only in one or two places, was potentially the best. We found this voice in the following sentences: "I have lived in this peaceful, calm place all my life, but I can remember a time when I was five years old when I didn't like to go out of my house because I was afraid of Mrs. Willowby, a widow who lived next door to my family." Most obviously in the following: "There was a mysterious atmosphere about her place because the garage door was always down and a light was always shining through the curtains on the far right window on the second floor." We spent some time in characterizing this voice. The voice we entitled the "alien adult" is found in such sentences as: "The residents of this area take great pride in their property; therefore, the grounds are well-groomed." The "artificial child" voice can be heard in the following: "Mrs. Willowby was very strange and scary. She always wore dark colored clothes and a little black scarf around her hair. Her hair was pure white and she was about five feet four inches tall. She was very thin and had long slender fingers." The problem we confronted was how to convey to the student, the writer, our understanding of the voice-mixture problem, how to get him to hear the separate voices and to make some evaluation as to which is the best voice, the most appropriate voice, given the object of the paper.

After the staff meeting, I took the paper into my section of seven students, one of whom was the author. We read the paper together, the author reading it aloud:

> All my life I have lived in a small suburb of Dayton, Ohio. Oakwood, the community in which I live, is a tranquil place. The streets are lined with trees, and the majority of the houses are red brick homes set back from the road. The residents of this area take great pride in their property; therefore, the grounds of each home are well-groomed. The community is especially beautiful in the spring when the air is filled with the fragrance of the flowers in bloom and when the trees are completely out. I have lived in this peaceful, calm place all my life, but I can remember a time when I was five years old when I didn't like to go out of my house because I was afraid of Mrs. Willowby, a widow, who lived next door to my family.
>
> Mrs. Willowby's house was like most of the homes in the area. It was red brick with shrubbery along the front, and there was a small row of flowers on each side of the walk which led from the front door to the street. However, her house never seemed to have the charm of the other homes in the area. Maybe I felt this way about her house because the grass was always too long, or maybe because the paint was chipping off the black shutters, but I know that her house never seemed to fit in with the rest. There was a mysterious atmosphere about her place because the garage door was always down and a light was always shining through the curtains in the far right window on the second floor. When I would go to bed at night, the light would be on, and whenever I woke up in the night and looked out my window, the awful light would still be shining. During the night I could hear music which sounded very unusual coming from her house.
>
> Mrs. Willowby was very strange and scary. She always wore dark colored clothes and a little black scarf around her hair. Her hair was pure white, and she was about five feet four inches tall. She was very thin and had long slender fingers. No one ever came to see her, and the only time she left the house was when she went shopping at the grocery store up the street. Because she was constantly going to her neighbors about their children, the children started to hate and fear her. They called her the witch.
>
> One day the four year old twins who lived on the other side of my house wandered over to Mrs. Willowby's yard. They had a large red ball with them and started to play ball on the "witch's" driveway. After about five minutes Mrs. Willowby came charging out of her house with her black scarf flying and started screaming at them. She yelled as though they were cats or dogs that she was trying to scare away. The twins did not understand what they had done wrong; therefore, they ran home as fast as they could. As I watched this incident from my bedroom window, my fear of the "witch" increased.
>
> I started to hate to go to bed at night because I was sure that some night she was going to try to come through my window to hurt me. I became so afraid of the "witch" that I hated to walk by her house for fear she would come out and yell at me if I even put a foot on her lawn. Therefore, I always walked on the opposite side of the street until I could cross to my home.
>
> My mother, who can always find the good in people, tried to tell me not to fear Mrs. Willowby, but I kept on being afraid. Mother was friendly

to Mrs. Willowby and tried to make friends with her but to no avail. Mrs. Willowby did not want to have anything to do with my parents especially since they had a child. I was told by mother to stay away from Mrs. Willowby's as much as possible because she did not want children to be around. When my mother told me to stay away from the "witch's" house, I knew that Mrs. Willowby had to be evil because my mother was always able to get along with anyone.

My most terrifying experience concerning Mrs. Willowby occurred soon after my mother told me to stay away from the "witch." Mother and I were at the grocery one day, and mother sent me to get some milk. As I rounded the corner to the produce department, I saw Mrs. Willowby standing in the aisle. I was so scared that I could not move; I just stood and stared at her. She took one look at me and said that she knew I was the nasty little girl from next door. I couldn't say a word. I turned around and ran back to my mother. Mother could tell how upset I was, and consequently she finished her shopping and took me home.

That was the first time that I came face to face with the "witch," and it was also the last time. I stayed away from her house, and I refused to go to the grocery with my mother. I never saw Mrs. Willowby again because she moved three months after my first encounter with her. Even though I only came face to face with the "witch" once, I have never forgotten her. As I remember her now, she was the first person whom I really feared in my life.

--Linda Hussey

At that point I asked the class if they could make any distinctions whatsoever in voice; that is, did they hear any multiplicity of voices? Could they point to any one voice and offer some characterization of it? I got no response to this question, so I started over again by asking them simply to characterize in any fashion whatever the voice of the paper. At this point someone pointed to the sentence quoted earlier which contains the phrase "when I was five years old" and made the observation that this obviously was an adult voice reminiscing about this period of childhood. I asked for some further qualifications or characterizations of the voice; we got some terms such as "nostalgic" based on that sentence. Someone came up with the term "connected." When I tried to pursue the meaning of this further, he was a little vague, but seemed to have in mind an adult being somehow intimately related or "connected" to the experience which is being related. I then asked someone to start reading at the beginning of that paragraph -- this sentence occurs in the first paragraph -- and asked if they found this voice to be consistent throughout the paragraph. In reading that paragraph the class came to the conclusion that there was a difference -- two different voices -- apparent there. They felt that the explaining voice, the matter-of-fact voice, which offers such information as "The streets are lined with trees and the majority of the houses are red brick houses set back from the road. The residents of this area take great pride in their property; therefore, the grounds of each home are well-groomed," etc., was quite different from the connected, nostalgic, reminiscing adult voice which appears later in the paragraph. At this point, someone said that while he could see that there were adult voices, it appeared to him that on the second page of the essay, there was a rather different voice which didn't seem to be adult at all. He cited the paragraph which contains the following: "They (four-year-old-twins) had a large red ball with them and started to play in the witch's driveway. After about five minutes Mrs. Willowby came charging out of her house with her black scarf flying and started screaming at them. She yelled as though they were cats or dogs that she was trying to scare away." This voice was characterized as a child voice, an attempt to imitate or reflect the mind of the child at that traumatic moment. Thus without too much leading, although obviously some on my part, the class was able to distinguish three voices.

We proceeded then to go through the entire paper again, noting these three voices when they occurred. The first adult, or as we called it in the staff meeting "real adult," voice was detected in those lines that I have quoted before: "There was a mysterious atmosphere about the place because of the garage door, etc." And occasionally a later occurrence was noted. However, it was thought that the "child" voice took over on the second page and pretty well dominated. But not consistently so, because of the intrusion of (the class concluded this) the second adult voice, with such phraseology as: "Therefore, consequently," etc., which broke up the imitative child voice, and destroyed the illusion this voice was attempting to create. For example, the class literally winced when this sentence was read: "I turned around and ran back to my mother. Mother could tell how upset I was, and consequently she finished her shopping and took me home," winced on the word "consequently" as being an obvious incongruity in voice.

The question was then raised as to which of the voices, or which voice, was most appropriate, would be most effective in relating the experience of the paper. It was generally agreed that the second adult voice or "alien adult" voice was definitely not appropriate, not effective, and should be eliminated. Some members of the class felt that through the use of the child's voice, the "imitative child" voice, the purpose of the paper could be more effectively accomplished, that is, the world of the child's fears could be realized. Others agreed basically with me and the staff, and found the real adult voice, especially as manifested in the sentence about the garage door and the light shining through the curtains of the far right window, to be by far the most effective voice and having the most potential for creating a real experience for the reader and conveying both the fear of the child and the comprehension of the adult. It is true that I did, toward the end of the class, come down fairly hard on that particular voice and on that particular sentence, making it quite plain that I found it to be the most effective, the best voice; but I believe that the class was able to see the differences in voice in the paper, and that their conclusions were not totally a product of my preconclusions.

November 21

I met with seven students, the same seven I have been working with for the past few weeks, and used the John Wakabayashi tape and transcript.* I began the class by handing out the transcript, asking the students to read it carefully, making an attempt to audiolize or visualize the voice of the speaker:

JOHN: Our next vacation starts. It's a very big adventure. It's where I get carried three miles.

BOB: You get carried three miles?

JOHN: On the gigantic slopes of Lassen. Now this is how it came out. We started out at six o'clock. We went on route one-oh --- no, no, we went on route 80 --- no, we started out so early, we started out at -- oh, it was, I guess it was noon, about three o'clock -- and we started out into country that looked like scorched -- like it was burnt by a fire, and we went past hills that looked like this: one side was black and the other side -- it was so even -- one side was black and the other side was brown. And then we reached a scorching valley that made me and my father complain about how hot it was. I couldn't stand it and neither could my father. And that's why we took a stupid route back, after we had stayed at Lassen.

BOB: But you were leaving now?

JOHN: Yeah, and then we went up to Red Bluff, and that's the place that's hot -- you hear of it a lot in the weather report, Red Bluff 107 degrees. That's the place that's hot all the time.

BOB: And you went there?

JOHN: No, we went there and kept on going on -- we turned on 36, and then turned on this other one, and we ended up in Manzanita Lodge, and that was the nicest place in -- at the edge of Lassen National Park. And you know when you're far away, it looks like you're only one foot away from Lassen, but you're twenty miles of road winding and all that stuff. So we stayed at this lodge -- it was eleven o'clock; that's really late. And my poor little brother was all worn out -- he was sleeping. He liked to fall asleep, but from now on when we go on trips that are fifty miles long he just dozes off in our station wagon; he loves to sleep. But I'm going to tell you the rest of the story. And the next day we were -- me and my little brother went rowing; we rowed on Manzanita Lake.

---

*See Papanikolas' logs of January 9 and 16 for a somewhat different use of these materials. Also, see Charlotte Morse's log (Section 55) for classes based on additional tapes of children.

BOB: Rowing?

JOHN: Uh-uh. And this was when I was in the late five-year-old. 'Cause we go -- this was July when Lassen had lots of snow and it was fun to go up there. And to --- and for little rest all we did is stop and dug at the snow and ate some -- 'cause it tastes so good.

BOB: What state were you in then?

JOHN: We were in California -- Lassen is northern California. And so, it was real fun, but until I got to only the one-mile point I was about one mile ahead of my father who had to tie his shoe strings. And I raced up the mountain till I was one mile ahead of him. And then he came up behind me and then we had to rest at Cabin 1. And so when we got to the very top --- ur, the -- I better tell you the part of snow. Well, me and my mother which are good mountain climbers were way ahead of my father, you know, we were way ahead, walking on the trail, and we came to this muddy part where the snow was melting and it went * * * *, and then we went straight into the snow. And then we went up to the mud slide, where there's a huge slope like this, where it's very steep. And it's real scary. And then---that's----when we-----and I went a little bit -- about 100 feet into the mud slide to take a bite of snow or to make a little snowball for myself to eat. You can make a snowcone if you add just a little bit of fruit punch.

BOB: Yeah, make different flavor ice cream.

JOHN: Yeah, snowcones. And then we reached -- and then I went on with my father. And I had to wait at the top, and I was as -- I was as angry as a bull when the vacation was finished; I was furious. Every day I would get a rock and just bang it on my head. Well, I'm going to tell you when we were at the top. There was Catle Wall Peak which Daddy had conquered, and I wanted to get there. And we got down at around seven thirty. The next day we started out to conquer Cinder Cone, and I was as weary on that -- as on any other mountain. I --- I rested at every number. There's marker numbers that tell you -- and at the -- you follow the numbers on the book, and each number has an interesting thing that you read and see what it is. Now, when you're way, way up high on top at something like twenty-one, and I was as -- and I was about to quit; I had taken enough. I was like this. And then when I was about to give up at the turn, Father called from about fifty feet up ahead, "This is the top!", and so I ran-- on this dirt part where you get to the top. It's no longer dirt now, it's cinder, 'cause I guess people had taken -- have taken short cuts. But--- that was when we first saw our first triple crater -- three craters, Cinder Cone has three craters. And I went -- oh, I was just --- one-eighth into the biggest crater, and then stopped 'cause it was -- there was this slope about almost straight up on the trail. And then we said, "What if we should get up a rock slide that starts?" At this time there was cinder there, and I guess they cleared it out and put rocks there; maybe the rain just washed it away -- 'cause it's not there anymore, the cinder in the crater -- there's not very much. Now, this is going back -- my father had taken such a beating going through the hot weather in the Sacra--- in the huge Sacramento Valley, which is very long. San Joaquin Valley is bigger, but those are the two major valleys of California. And so we went home on 44, and I -- and the forest that seemed never-ending was just the Lassen National Forest, and we would be going through the huge Calamuth National Forest after we passed through the top end of Sacramento Valley, and by the time we got out of that it was beginning to get dark. So we went up --- it was -- you know, there's no other road in California I would say that is more windy than 299 in the Calamuth Mountains. It winded up to the elevation of 3123, and then we were going down, up, down, up, down, up. And by the time we reached Arcata, which is what 's talking about, which is not the way you pronounce it. You really pronounce it "Arcahta," you don't pronounce it "Arcatta." But anyway, when we got there it was eleven twenty -- and I was getting tired, and I was angry 'cause I didn't get to see the mad river. Then I could get a little bit more mad at myself and conk myself a little bit more and give myself a greater beating. But I didn't get to see the mad river, which is quite a big river. And I love rivers. In fact, rivers and mountains is the order it is in the Sierra Club -- it's either you go to a river or a mountain. That's what my father said. I never knew that I had an order that was just like the Sierra Club. Well, anyway...

BOB: So then you got back?

JOHN: ...we stayed at Arcata, 'cause we know we couldn't go all the way down to the forest where the big redwoods --- or go all the way home; it would be too late. But this time we had to stay here 'cause I was sleepy, Daddy was getting sleepy, 'cause -- he, he wasn't --- I mean, my father was getting sleepy, 'cause he had---- 'cause he wasn't used to this yet, 'cause this was one of his tiring vacations -- he doesn't like to go on very windy roads. I'm used to it, but he isn't. I don't know why.

I suggested that they take a few notes, get a sound in their head, of what the speaker would sound like in fact, and then we would talk about the voice and finally listen to the actual recording. After they read the transcript, I asked for a few characteristics of the voice, any general comments that anyone wanted to make. Someone suggested that from reading the transcript the speaker seemed to be nervous, in a state of excitement, in fact rather confused. There was some comment about the artificiality of the phrase "I was as angry as a bull"; people felt that this sounded a little unnatural given the context and the voice, the young child voice, that was predominant. Beyond this there was very little that was said or that could be got from the students in terms of characterizing the voice from the simple transcript.

Then the tape was played, and the students were asked how the actual recorded voice compared to the voice they had imagined. Most of them said they had been quite mistaken. The voice they had imagined was not at all like that which was revealed on the tape. There was a strongly humorous element in the actual recording (there was a good bit of laughter during the playing of the tape), which no one had picked up from reading the transcript. There was a strong sense of egotism, the emphasis on the "I", which was not noticed in reading the transcript. Everyone agreed that John Wakabayashi did not sound nervous in his reading, although he might have been excited. And rather than being in an ordinary sense confused, he appeared to have a definite plan in mind for his narration and to resent on occasion the intrusion of the interviewer and to proceed after the interviewer's question with a definite purpose.

The mixed-voice quality was noted, was commented on much more after the class heard the tape. They discussed at some length whether the mixed voice was necessarily a fault. (By mixture I mean that there is a good bit of what you might say is John Wakabayashi's father's language which he has adopted and is imitating, perhaps unconsciously, in such phrases as "the gigantic slopes of Lassen," "the scorching valley," "conquering Cinder Cone," etc.) We had a rather full discussion of the character of John as suggested in the interview: the quality of his spoken voice, the quality of his mind, the perceptions that he made, the kind of intelligence he reveals. It was concluded that there was a great deal missed in the simple silent reading of the transcript. While the cause of this might have been merely imperceptive reading, it also seemed safe to say that a lot of the quality of John's voice simply does not appear in the flat transcript. I raised the question of why this might be true and the more significant question as to how the qualities of John's voice which were so evident on the tape might be transferred to a written page from which it could be "heard" by a reader. In other words, what techniques of art, what problems of writing were involved here in capturing this voice so that a reader, without benefit of a tape recorder, could come closer to imagining, to audiolizing this voice. The point was made that mere imitation -- obviously the transcript is a direct imitation of the spoken voice -- would not be effective, that the writer who was attempting to capture the voice would have to do something else, would have to rely on a carefully selected language, a carefully formed rhythmical pattern perhaps, an artful selection of detail, etc., to render this voice. I asked the class to imagine themselves as John Wakabayashi being asked to write for an English class about this vacation. How could they bring the quality of the voice, which they all concluded would be a desirable quality, into the written assignment? We struggled with this for a bit without coming to any sort of conclusion. However, some people said that they thought it could be done through a third person point of view, not through a first person. That is, if someone were to describe the way John was talking they might be able to convey it.

I thought that the problem which was raised here -- that is, the discrepancy between the actual spoken taped voice and the transcript -- was rather central to some of the concerns of the Voice Project: the relationship between the spoken and the written voice, how one can use the good qualities of the spoken and the written voice, how one can use the good qualities of the spoken voice, render them effectively in a written voice. I asked them to write, therefore, two paragraphs or so in John Wakabayashi's language and voice about either an incident that occurs in the transcript we have or an imaginary incident in which they try to recreate the qualities of the spoken voice, to catch its essence more effectively than a literal transcript. One of these was to be done from the first person point of view, assuming John's mind and language; the other from the third person point of view.

November 29

Our class today was a continuation of our work with the John Wakabayashi tape (see my previous entry for the assignment made concerning this). In an effort to see how effective students had been in capturing the essence of John Wakabayashi's voice in their own paragraphs, we were fortunate enough to have visiting the class someone who had never heard the tape or seen the transcript, and so had no notion what the actual original voice sounded like. Charlotte was given the paragraph of one of the students and asked to look it over and then read it dramatically and attempt to see what she could pick up from the written word -- how she would characterize the voice. This was done for each of the six students who had brought their paragraphs in and followed by the readings of the paragraphs themselves. The class, then, after each of Charlotte's readings commented upon how close or how effective the writer had been in capturing John's voice. One paragraph in particular by Robert Rund was generally agreed to be quite effective in this:

> The next day we started out to conquer Cinder Cone. We got up real early... at dawn we got up. The sun was just coming... It was sunrise. It was neat. Daddy wanted to go back to sleep but I wasn't sleepy. We started at the foot of the.. of Cinder Cone and I raced... I beat Daddy to the first marker. He was still tireder -- I mean more tired than I was. He stopped to catch his breath and then, next we went to the second marker. Dad got to the top before I did 'cause I was weary, and he had to rest at the 1st, and 6th, no 7th markers. I would've beat him though. It was neat from the top.
>
> -- Robert Rund

We asked Robert to tell us some of the techniques he had used in this attempt. He said he had concentrated on the factor of competition between John and his father and also on John's precise notation of detail. He also said he'd tried in the actual rhythms of the writing to catch the energetic flow of John's voice. There were some instances of halting hesitation and correction which were found in John's transcript.

Another student, Bill Bly, had written a paragraph which was closely taken from the actual transcript:

> For our next vacation I went with my parents to Lassen National Park. On the way we drove through a huge, hot, scorched valley. My father complained bitterly about the heat. I didn't mind it so much, though. We stopped at Manzanita Lodge on route 36, right at the edge of the Lassen National Park. The next day we went up to the mountain where there was snow. I ate some and I had fun playing in the snow. There was Catle Wall Peak which was an elevation of 3123 which Daddy had conquered last year. I wanted to get to the top. I ran up ahead of Daddy and even before I got to the one mile point I was far ahead. I ran faster when I saw the top and when I reached it I yelled to Daddy, "This is the top!" At the top I saw Cinder Cone, which is actually a triple crater. We went home the next day on 44. I was so mad for a long time that when I thought about my trip in my room at home I would beat my head against my wall.
>
> --Bill Bly

He used actual phrases out of the transcript, with some slight modification. His paragraph was not particularly effective, but we tried to examine very minutely his actual use of transformation out of the transcript, but could come to no definite conclusions. But through the repetition of various words and phrases, especially "to the top," or "the top," he did convey John's burst to out-do his father, and while he had in a sense distorted the actual text he was drawing from, since John did not use this actual kind of repetition, he had captured the essence of the voice, or he was at least heading in that direction.

Dow Harvey's attempt was not so successful:

> I remember I carried my very own Canadian back pack as I trotted along the old Appalachian trail. Of course Dad carried a much larger pack but mine was much heavier proportionally; at least that's what I told a few of my young friends. I liked the sound of the word "proportionally"; it sounded grown up. During the hike I always maintained a good lead on Dad. That was important since it showed my obvious hiking superiority. Even a twenty foot lead served my purposes. Almost every time I glanced back, Dad was looking at the ground at the plants or else staring into the trees at some bird. Poor Dad, he was still trying to learn what all the plants and animals were like. I guessed he needed the rest, too. I thought I knew all the names of the birds and plants already, so I never had to stop for such trivia. Besides I didn't need to rest like he did.
>
> --Dow Harvey

However, it was determined that he, in a sense, had misinterpreted the assignment. The major objection to his was that the language was much too sophisticated for John. He explained that he was attempting to write as John

Wakabayashi, a freshman at college. He did try to bring in the elements of competition with his father and certain bits of his precociousness in terms of diction.

Esther Ball's paper, or paragraph, was fairly effective:

> I flopped down in a creampuff of snow and spread my arms and legs out as far as they would go. Then I slid them back and forth across the snow to make a snowangel. But I was rolling around too fast, much faster than my father who was trying to make an angel too, and I skiied on my stomach all the way down the snowbank into the road, Route 197. While I was rolling down, the freezing snow on my face stung my nose and my tongue. But it tasted so good I wanted to make a snowcone. My mother brought some sugar from the rest of our picnic lunch that we ate at the top of Lassen and I mixed it with the snow. My father and my mother and I all ate a snowcone, but my little brother scrunched his into a ball and threw it at me. I love snowcones, but my little brother is a brat.
>
> --Esther Ball

It was noted that some of her language, for example the first sentence: "I flopped down in a cream puff of snow," was too feminine for John; it was really out of character. She felt -- we felt -- that the sentence structures were a little too neat, too correct and balanced, to actually convey John's voice and rhythms.

After the individual readings and discussion had been completed, I read dramatically from the portion of the transcript, followed by each one of the paragraphs. I attempted to put as much of John's voice into each one of the paragraphs as I could. The class was asked in a sense to rank or judge my readings as to which was closest to John's -- again to the actual transcript that I read from. Again, the paragraph by Robert Rund was felt to be the most effective. The class was then asked to jot down in notebook form, in journal form, any observations they had had on this exercise. They were asked to reflect on the significance of this in terms of their own writing, to see if they had gained anything from it in terms of the relationship of their spoken voice to their written voice, and whether they had hit upon any devices or techniques for incorporating the good qualities of the spoken voice into the written voice. They all felt that this exercise was interesting and helped them see the notion of "voice" in a new way, but Esther Ball wrote of a "break-through":

> I finally realize a relationship. Everyone has an internal voice (a manifestation of his soul, his character), a speaking voice, and a writing voice. Communication, the root of human relationships, is based on effective transmission from the internal voice to the spoken or written voice. The problem -- mitigating the loss of animation during the trans-

fer from step to step. Today's paper illustrated this sapping of enthusiasm and feeling. In trying to capture John Wakabayashi's inner voice (his character) as expressed on the tape recording of his own spoken voice, I neglected many of the qualities that are John in my transcription to the written voice. His spontaneous excitement, unrepression, and egotism were buried in my written essay. Though other attempts did capture John's character, they did so by imitating his speaking voice. I have been too engrossed with the mechanics of writing to consider the crucial purpose -- communication.

--Esther Ball

In essence, this exercise seemed to me to fall into two parts. One was using John Wakabyashi's voice in an attempt to recognize and to describe and to pin down the nature of the spoken voice, and the other, still using his voice, to incorporate it or to capture its essence in the written voice. This was to be a parallel with the spoken voice of the students, if they could learn to listen to their own spoken casual conversational voice, to recognize its qualities and determine which of those would be good to use in a written voice. And they could hopefully learn to adapt, to adopt, those elements.

SECTION 54. MARK MIRSKY AND FRANCELIA MASON. LOG BY FRANCELIA MASON.

January 12

Full class meeting. The purpose of the class was to introduce students to the idea of experimenting with their own voices, to relax them, give them a sense of language as communication on the most primitive level. We began with an exercise in shouting:

MARK: I want you to shout. I want everybody in this room to shout. We'll just pass it around and everyone's going to be embarrassed, I know. (Laughter) Is the tape recorder on? --

(Students shout all at once)

MARK: Francelia, you give us a polite --- (much noise from class)

FRANCELIA: Well, I've been thinking about this, and I have some specialized shouts..... (Much microphone noise)

MARK: That's wonderful. But I want first just a raw, kind of good-humored shout, before we get -- I'll give one: AAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHH!! That's the first shout. Quickly, Francelia.

FRANCELIA: Yaa. (Sort of an Indian war whoop)

MARK: That's good. What's your name?

BOB: Bob.

MARK: Bob what?

BOB: Finger.

MARK: All right. Finger.

BOB: AAAHH!

MARK: Next shout.

BOY: AAAAHHHHH!

GIRL: AAAGHA!

BOY: UUUUUUUHHHH!

BOY: EEEEEEHHHHAAAAUUUU! (Laughter)

GIRL: YYYYOOWW!

BOY: HA!

BOY: UUUHGG! (ETC., ETC.)

MARK: Well, that was pretty good. Initial dip into the world of shouts. (Laughter) Now let's consider for a few seconds, what do we use a shout for? Or what does an animal say? An animal shouts, doesn't it? In a way? What does a shout do? Remembering times that you've shouted, when do you shout?

BOY: At events.

GIRL: If you just want to make a noise.

MARK: Well, but you've told me you have specialized shouts, Francelia. I don't think you ever just want to make a noise. There are reasons for your making a noise, and that conditions the kind of noise you make.

BOY: You mean in pain sometimes?

MARK: All right, you shout in pain.

GIRL: Frustration.

BOY: I was thinking like more or less out at football games when the Cowboys blow it. (Laughter)

MARK: Yeah, that's true, they get most primitive. At football games words won't contain our outrage. (Laughter) More reasons?

BOY: A warning?

MARK: A warning, yes.

BOY: Isn't fear probably the most common?

MARK: Perhaps.

BOY: Pleasure?

BOY: I know a woman who only shouts at foreigners because she thinks they understand her better.

MARK: There is something very profound in that. I think we shout when we feel that words won't communicate the extent of our feelings, or simply won't communicate. So you shout at somebody because you don't feel you're communicating. Words in a way are very polite, aren't they?

GIRL: It depends on the words.

MARK: Well, obscenity is a kind of shout, isn't it?

ANNE: I think the most effective use of obscenity I've ever heard is never loud. It's always very quiet and vicious and -- It's like those hideously subtle insults you used to use as weapons, as little kids.....

MARK: That's why I say obscenity is very polite.

ANNE: You said obscenity was a type of shouting.

MARK: Well, all right, and then the qualifying statement that -- (Laughter) -- It's a polite shout. Maybe not, I couldn't tell you. I can see being very polite and obscene -- swearing at somebody to be malicious. I mean, shouting kind of implies that you're out of control. And only when swears start to get out of control do they approach shouts. On the other hand, swears can be very anal -- can show that you're really in control, to put somebody down -- "nasty," "dope." Your whole mouth becomes an anus. You're not really going out of control.... Is the shout primarily a mark of going out of control? What do you think, Sylvia?

SYLVIA: I think sometimes it's just a point of direction --

MARK: But you can say that about anything... I mean a good essay could be the direction of all your energies. What's the difference between shouting and words?

SYLVIA: Well, one takes more thought; the shout seems to come more spontaneously. And maybe works more.

BOY: Aren't words mostly pointed towards communicating, and a shout is more expressing?

GIRL: Well, you communicate with shouts too. Are we saying this: that you can't shout words?

MARK: Sure. You can shout words. But a shout is a very primitive form of communication....

We played the tape back and heard shouts of anguish, frustration, pain, anger, and high spirits. We started the tape again and this time asked each student to threaten another with a shout. We observed that these shouts were animal-like, whereas the first ones had seemed human. One student noticed also that everyone seemed to find it necessary to make a threatening gesture as well as a threatening noise.

We talked about writing down the sound of the shout. Paul Buttrey repeated his and we found that it could be spelled: "Yeaayhaaah." One student remarked that we often shout not when we want to attack, but to ward off an attack. We discussed formalized shouts as they turn into words -- slogans, such as "Push 'em back"; "Fifty-four forty or fight," and its frustrated power shown in the repetition of "f's" and "t's." The students were asked to recall chants, slogans, curses, swearing, and slang.

Slang introduced the subject of cliche. We talked about live language and dead language. I read from G. B. Shaw's satire using dead language to extend Macbeth into novel form. Mark read from the Gerty MacDowell section of Ulysses. We talked about language as a living organism in which words become dead and have to be discarded; and about Joyce's use of cliche and how he could construct poetry out of dead language.

Since this was Mark's first Voice Project class, I asked the first student I saw, Renton Rolph, how he liked it. Renton, one of the most responsive students first quarter, said he thought the lesson was "fantastic." My own strongest-impression was of the change in the classroom atmosphere: the students' vocabularies switched to informal, their responses became more spontaneous, the class laughter became charged. To me it seemed that students with former problems of inhibition became quieter; students with former problems of inattention became keenly engaged, and students formerly the most active and responsive remained so, but their enthusiasm took a new tone.

To me they bore out the claim that the interested student will excel under any good teaching method. Mark's teaching method and mood is the opposite of Sylvia Berkman's: she used a classroom technique of quiet understatement to evoke response to a reading source; her quiet, controlled devotion to words elicited energized opinion from the students. Mark started the class from the personal and spontaneous and built toward an idea. His classroom technique is dramatic, animated, with strong self-assertion; and he expects the student to reply in kind and to build with him. The two techniques are roughly deductive and inductive. And they both work emphatically well with the students, not so much because they are techniques as because each is the most direct expression of that teacher's personality.

Assignment: the class was assigned to read a series of frontier boasts and shouts from Botkin's American Folklore, the great curse from Leviticus 27:14, and King Lear with attention to the curses of the king. They were to memorize one shout or curse to give in class. The writing assignment was to write two pages insulting Mark.

January 19.

Full class meeting. We read and discussed the students' insult papers from last week's assignment. Students recited or read aloud frontier shouts and curses from King Lear, and Mark directed them in use of their voices to express the curse:

MARK: Whether you like it or not, there's only one way to read, and that's to act. So right now I'm not your teacher, I'm a director, working with an actor... Now, in a rehearsal, any actor who dared to answer for another actor would be thrown out the door. The reason is this: I'm not interested in a "right" answer here; I want him to build in his head a sense of Kent, so the next time he gets up to read that passage, he's going to read it with some sense of Kent. That means he has to answer those questions. There's no series of "right" answers to this question. What I'm trying to build in Kirk is some sense of Kent, not my sense of Kent; his sense of Kent. Now, what's the first thing that Kent does to Lear?

KIRK: Well, he comes in and says he would like to serve him.

MARK: How does he prove it?

KIRK: He hasn't obeyed the king's rule, and he thinks the king could do a better job --

MARK: Who comes tripping across the stage? -- The very person that he's talking to now, right? Who's he talking to right now?

KIRK: Oswald.

MARK: In that first scene Oswald ignores King Lear. Next time he walks across the stage, Kent sticks his foot out and trips Oswald. And he kicks him. And then Lear says, "You are my man." That scene foreshadows this scene. In this scene, it becomes obvious that Kent is trying to do the same thing to Oswald that he did previously, to trip him up, except that Oswald is wary now.... Try to think what Oswald would feel, how he would act. For a moment, let's say you and I are at the Be-In, except I'm a Hell's Angel. Well, let me play it, and then I'll let you play it, all right? You can play it as Kent. I'm a Hell's Angel; I've got a hundred bums behind me. You're a big blond-haired guy, and I don't like you. I say, "Hey, Schmo!" (Laughter)

KIRK: "Hey, Dogface!"

MARK: "Hey, Queer!" What am I doing? What am I trying to do?--- I'm trying to get him into a fight! I'm trying to get him into a fight! Right? -- and I'm going to clean you! What's Kent trying to do here?

KIRK: He's doing the same thing, exactly the same thing.

MARK: Right, that's why he's cursing. All right, let's hear you do that now. Let's see you give those insults. But you've gotta pick somebody out in the room.

(Kirk reads from Lear)

MARK: All right, let me stop you -- Take the time to say them.

(Kirk reads again -- better -- pauses between insults)

We finished with a round-robin reading of the assigned curse from Leviticus.

Evaluation: Mark: I thought the students got more sophisticated in their discussion of the rhetorical difficulties involved in insulting. I was pleased by the boldness with which they read the insults aloud, despite the fact that at times they teetered on the edge of sophomoric giggling. They kept watching me to see if I was blushing, and seemed particularly excited by the fact that they could say things to my face. The second part of the class was probably the most exciting, with the live reading from the tapes.

Francelia: Though we found valuable points for comment on the student papers -- the colloquial voice, the narrator as fictional character, the problem of using specifics -- I too was most impressed by the second part of the session. Here Mark coached the students into opening up the world of their voices. Each student gave at least two or three readings of his curse. Between readings Mark directed each student toward the purpose of the curse, toward his feeling what he was doing. And so the curses changed from angry monotones on the first readings into mounting bellows of rage or into shrewish provocations. Mark gave Nick Selby an audience for his Davy Crockett brag by turning the class into a hooting frontier mob: to hear the rendition on tape was like tuning into a radio drama.

Reminded that he was a killer Owen Blank snarled out his Mike Fink brag. But the climax of the class came when Mark then pitted Davy Crockett against Mike Fink: their voices reached top register in what to me was a stunningly real exchange of rage.

Assignment: Write two pages praising Mark and a short, one-paragraph curse. At student request Mark assigned a rereading of King Lear.

February 23.

Full class. A session on living folklore. We played the several tapes the students had collected:

> Down in Long Beach, in nigger-town, used to be a place called the Cozy Hotel. Hustlers would pile up there by the score. Every night from, oh, about 7 o'clock on, if you want a piece, you just lay out your ten bucks, and, oh yea, three dollars for the room - we can't forget about that. And you go up, and then you get a dose of clap, the old Joe, or some crabs.
>
> I've been in Cozy once before, and it was a bad piece is all I can say....
>
> Well, in about a month or so the cops busted the Cozy, along with about twenty sluts. But never fear, the whores are still here. All you have to do is walk down Anaheim and Atlantic in Long Beach, go in the Showcase Bar, then come out of there after you've had a few drinks, and you hear a voice: "Say there, boy! Wanta date?" And you just say: "Sure 'nuf, honey!" and then you get a piece just like before. And that's the story of Long Beach and the Cozy Hotel.
>
> --Anonymous Stanford student,
> collected by Bob Stuart

> Well, anyhow, the jeweler and the cooper got together, you know. So a jeweler began to brag, you know. Had a few to drink, you braaag. I don't care what line you run, you brag. If your a boilermaker you all go in there and a feelin' good, a, you find the truth out too, you know, see.
>
> You brag.
>
> Yeah, braaaag. That's one a the number ones. So this jeweler started in to brag. He says, you know, he says, "George," that was my father's name, you know, he says, "my work has got to be to a hair." And, ahhha, my Dad was a man never said very much, you know. But he'd just store up his powder, you know, an' pick up the points a what you said, see, because he always figured--I could use that gainst you--see. And of course if you want to be a big damn liar and lie out of it, aahhh well, that's a different thing but your conscience'll hurt you afterads if your good friends, see. Well, so, he got done with his story. The cooper, my Dad, he says, "Well, that's nothin. Up to a hair?" he says.
>
> "Up to a hair."

"Yeah, see this joint here on my bar, if I could push a hair through there, the barrel would leak. It wouldn't be worth a damn."

That's true too.

--Older man in East Palo
Alto Junk Yard, collected
by Renton Rolph

A Tale My Jewish Grandmother Told Me

Yes, I can think of one story my grandmother told me. Her father was a tailor, and this was a story about a tailor and the devil. The devil came to this tailor and said, "I bet I can make a suit of clothes faster than you can." And of course this was in the days before sewing machines. So the tailor said, "Well, I don't think you can. I've been doing this work all my life, and I think I know how to make a suit of clothes better than you do." And the devil said, "Well, if I can make a suit of clothes better than you can, I want to have possession of your soul."

So they started out simultaneously to make the suit of clothes. And the devil thought, 'The thing to do is thread my needle with the longest thread I can, so I won't have to stop and rethread it all the time!' And the tailor just took an average length of double thread, oh, maybe about sixteen inches or something like that. But the devil took a great big long thread and at each stitch, when he pulled the stitch through, he had to fly out the window because the thread was so long, and come back, see? Well, of course the tailor won the bet, because he knew that if you just took an average piece of thread that you won't have to pull out too far, it works faster. And that was the story. I think this story probably was told by master apprentices to impress on them the fact that they mustn't use too long a thread.

--Anne West

We discussed the transition from account into folklore fantasy. In Bob's tape we talked about the narrator's long warm-up through lesser talk and songs to his real story, then the relish for language and rhythm with which he told it, and talked about the difference between telling a joke and telling a personal tale in which something is at stake for the narrator -- the Cooper's son became involved when the joke was about his father's profession.

The folklore assignment was a decided success. In culling from the material on the tapes, the students were forced to discover what and why parts were most valuable as folklore. Nick taught his folklore piece at Terman; Anne West said she recalled the sound of Bob's "Cozy Hotel" tape in writing dialogue later; Renton said that the moment his cooper began to brag was "it" for him. Owen Blank remarked that the imagination and fantasy is the "realism" of folklore.

A former Kennedy aide and political speech writer visited and talked about language as political strategy, with recordings of Kennedy and Nixon to prove her points. She showed how Nixon's words drew on the folklore of the American value system.

Reading assigned: Dorson, Buying the Wind, sections on Maine Downeasters and Southern Mountaineers. In Great Jewish Short Stories, sections through first half of book, including Babel, Bratslav, Agnon, Aleichem, Singer.

SECTION 55. CLIVE MILLER AND CHARLOTTE MORSE. LOG BY CHARLOTTE MORSE.

January 25.

Full group meeting. Tom Grissom visited class to talk about Upward Bound and to show the students Toni Nadley's essay (from the Upward Bound student magazine) on Gunn and Ravenswood High Schools (Ravenswood is a predominantly Negro school, Gunn rather more white middle-class):

> To me Gunn is better than Ravenswood because there's not a lot of Negroes there. Yes, I think this is Ravenswood's main problem. Why? Simply because there are some kids over at Ravenswood who are loud-mouthed, who don't want to learn and who are just attending school because they have to. No, I'm not saying that Gunn is perfect and doesn't have it's ups and downs, but there aren't any loud-mouth Negroes there. They're over there to learn and to get a good education, because they know how important it is to have an education. They're not there to show off their fancy clothes or to see who can yell the loudest.
>
> If you were to take one loud-mouth from Ravenswood and send him or her over to Gunn I don't think they would act the same way. Why? Because they would look like a fool acting loud over there. They wouldn't be able to make friends easily. And sooner or later they would stop, unless they didn't mind being by themselves.
>
> Another reason, why I think Gunn is better than Ravenswood is because they have a broader range of subjects to choose from. It doesn't matter what grade you are in. You are put in subjects according to your ability. For instance, English classes. There are different levels and you can get put into any, regardless of what grade you're in. If you think you're doing good in an English class, and so does your teacher, she may recommend you to your counselor and he or she will put you up to a different level. You can go up to level five. As far as History is concerned there is a broader range of classes you can go in. At Ravenswood there are only four that I know of and you're placed in a class according to your grade; whereas

at Gunn you're placed in a class according to your ability.

In my Government class we do things that keep the class interested, not reading some dull book. Right now we're doing something that is concerned with the future. We're trying to find out what Palo Alto might be like in 1990. We are going to different places, on our own, in Palo Alto and asking the people what they think it's going to be like in 1990. This to me is very interesting.

In Physical Education we get to pick what activity we want to participate in. This is because then we will be happy in what we are doing and can't complain to our teacher because this is what we picked.

If the teachers at Gunn feel that you need help in anything, they're willing to help you in any way possible. I'm not saying they don't do this at Ravenswood because I've known a student to go up and ask a teacher. It seems to me that some of the teachers at Ravenswood don't really care what happens to the student. But you can find some really nice teachers at Ravenswood if you are lucky. At Gunn before they go on to something different they make sure that each and every student understands their work. To me the majority of the kids at Ravenswood aren't really ready to settle down and learn. Another problem with Ravenswood is that you can go to school pregnant for four months, I believe, at Gunn as soon as they find out you are kicked out, which is the way it should be, I think, because pregnant girls set a bad example for the others.

The lunches are better and you have a wider variety to choose from. Therefore most of the people don't go off campus but you can if you want to. They have plate lunches for 45¢ that consist of some kind of hot plate, desert, and milk. If you don't like this you can always get hamburgers, hot dogs, french fries or cold sandwiches. There's two different kinds of drinks to choose from or hot chocolate or milk shakes. Then there are the vending machines with drinks, fruits, and candy.

Now let's talk about tests. One day during a test in my Government class our teacher walked out of the class and told us that if we wanted help he would be outside. No one cheated. I was shocked. I told the girl next to me that if this was at Ravenswood I think that the people would have cheated. In Algebra the answers are in our books, we have to show our work and check our own answers or ask a friend to show us how to do it and make sure that we understand. Because if we just copy the answers from the book or copied from a friend, how would this help us when it came time for a test? Or take our English teacher, she doesn't believe in giving tests so instead we write essays, when we have finished a book. We don't read from English books either, we read different paperbacks. We don't write Book Reports either.

Let's take my French class for another example. When I got to Gunn I was all set to go into French II but after about a week or so I didn't understand a word the teacher was saying so I had to repeat French and I came to find out that the teacher at Ravenswood didn't teach us anything like the teacher is teaching us here. Is this because I'm around a new environment? Knowing that this could be true I think some of the teaching at Gunn is better.

If I were paid to go back to Ravenswood I wouldn't go. I like it much better over at Gunn. There might be a lot of people who disagree with me but I do have a right to state my opinion, and this is how I feel.

—Toni Nadley

From talking about the content and the point of view of the narrator, Tom moved the discussion to a consideration of Toni's personality. Debbie was unable to respond fully to the feelings which Toni expresses -- Charlie tried to tell Debbie that being from Hawaii, she just couldn't understand easily. Lance tried to help Debbie realize the complexities of Toni's position; earlier Bob had suggested parallels to Toni's situation; within a single school when a student moves from one section to another, he may feel similarly toward the predominantly Negro section. Debbie was sincere in her attempt to understand and comments from Ruth, Annie, Diana, and John L. indicated explicitly that they were keenly following the dialogue between Debbie and her "guides." Meanwhile, sitting beside me, Jim and Andy were getting edgy. John B. exploded cynically, hostilely and selfishly that he was not getting anything out of the class, that civil rights was old hat and anybody who didn't know all about it was living in a vacuum, that this was an English class and supposed to be teaching him how to write and wasn't. After a brief reply from me telling John that his comment revealed extreme selfishness, Jim also blew up and criticized the way in which the class was being handled, the ends of it or lack of them, the inattention to anything that would help his writing which was ALL that he cared about, and the stupidity of giving so much time to this girl's piece when it wasn't even good -- no logic and no facts. I pointed out to him that his example of "no facts," the image of the Negro girl's shocked comment to her neighbor when the teacher at Gunn walked out during a test, was an extremely effective device for the essay and indeed more persuasive than statistics, that all of them might note this as an effective technique to increasing the interest of their prose pieces. By the end of this comment my exasperation was showing and Lance called me for it, justifiably. Clive told the class that they could never write unless they knew something of the world and men beyond themselves and argued, calmly and reasonably, for the appropriateness of allowing the class to follow the concerns of Debbie and group. In our defense Lance pointed out to Brenner that he would not be getting more direct writing help from regular freshman English, where discussion like the one we were having is common. Lance questioned that Voice Project was doing anything very different from regular freshman English and I agreed with him that it was not (except for some techniques, such as the use of the tape recorder and unusual writing assignments) -- that here as there the most direct help on one's writing was generally comments on papers, but I must point out to them that attitudes and terminology, as well as some techniques, differ from most regular freshman English sections. I think that some of the students left with clearer ideas of what the Voice Project could and could not do -- for one thing, it is not going to miraculously transform anyone's writing nor can every class session be of direct and immediate benefit to everyone. We reminded them that writing anytime anywhere is hard work more than anything and Voice Project can't change that.

Emotionally straining though the class was, I was rather glad of it, for it proved to the class 1) the difficulty even the openminded have getting beyond their own experience; 2) the naked selfishness human beings are capable of even in civilized circumstances; 3) that misunderstandings exist and must be dealt with; and 4) the tendency of the class to view education in terms of goals and relevancy of work to those goals, a healthy questioning attitude to have.

January 27

We again devoted section to the "Cain and Abel" selection. In order to get the students to participate imaginatively in the parts of Cain, Abel and God, Clive asked for three volunteers to do them. Ruth refused to play Cain when she realized it was to be an improvisation, so Debbie took over with Charlie as God and Dale as Abel. Debbie and Charlie worked hard at their parts but they self-consciously stepped out of their roles and laughed at their efforts. They relaxed the others and when Wayne, Dale, and Annie improvised, they were more successful. Wayne did better than anyone else at creating a good Abel -- the low pitch and resonance of his voice helped to lend dignity to his character. Although the murder scene was effectively done, Annie made God too soft and compassionate. We ended the class with a discussion of Annie's God, with Clive and me pointing out that they owe a writer an intelligent and objective reading, that to ignore what a writer says is to prevent one's reading from enlarging his perspective and to restrict the size of the world of literature. We were particularly addressing the grossly sentimental readers (who tend to be sentimental writers since they don't believe in evil) and I think we made an impression on them.

Mark came in for the evening group to get them to do a dramatic reading. After eyeing Lance from behind the shield of a newspaper, Mark called swiftly for people to accept the roles and told Lance that he, being the most cantankerous person in the room, was obviously the one to play Cain. Mark rejected Lance's excuse that he did not feel like a murderer by telling the class that no actor identifies with a murderer, but rather with something much closer to him -- like the bad-mouthing of Cain and of Lance. Caught short by Mark's firmness, there was nothing for Lance to do but cooperate and he did, learning something about his potential to render otherness as his own, an act similar to the writer's separation of himself from the narrator or characters of any piece. Don and Jim also participated. In order to loosen up the group, Mark had them improvise the scene and then showed them how to slow down their reading so that they got the sense of every line. Then Mark compared the Wakefield Master's "Cain and Abel" with the N-Towne we were using and pointed out the greater subtlety of dramatic effect achieved by the master.

With the exception of John Bremner who was openly hostile from the beginning of the meeting, the class enjoyed the performance. But once the question of the relevance of this sort of class to their writing came up, the students reacted negatively, except for the readers. I'm not certain that many of them understood the justifications for it, even though we talked about them, the chief one being the similar relationship of writer and actor to the characters they create.

February 9.

Carolyn Fitchett visited the afternoon section. Although she said rather little, I think she was interested in the material we were working with. Expecting a negative or neutral response from both classes to the tape made by Mike Schwartz of Frederica (a second grade student at De Anza), Clive was surprised to hear the freshmen laughing at the funny things in her story as he played the tape:

* * *

FREDERICA: Barbie decided to have a house, so I got a doll house for them.
MIKE: Oh, really?
CHARLIE: How big is it?
FREDERICA: It was this big.
MIKE: How are you going to explain that? How big is this big? As high as what?
FREDERICA: This is -- about this high.
CHARLIE: What's this high?
MIKE: About as high as a chair or what? About as high as a chair?
FREDERICA: Um-hum. But it isn't really like this -- it's like this. Clear to the bottom of the floor. It's about that tall.
MIKE: What color is the house?
FREDERICA: It was a little **** of a house. And Barbie decided to have a house of her very own, so Skipper said, "Well, how are we going to build a house?"

"Well, easy, we'll just use firewood." Then when Barbie's house was on fire, it burned all up.
MIKE: It burned all up. Did she get out in time?
FREDERICA: No. She got burned up, too.
MIKE: She did?
CHARLIE: Barbie did?
FREDERICA: She said, "Boy, that really burned me up."

* * *

FREDERICA: It was * * * Thanksgiving. That isn't a holiday. Skipper has to go to school, and when Skipper tries to go to school, she hits somebody's eye. And she had to go to the hospital on Thursday, and the time that she was there, she didn't feel so good. She had a big cold and flue, and it was right in her head, right here...right about here where her head is.
MIKE: Where's that?
FREDERICA: Right here.
MIKE: I mean, between your eyes is it? and a little bit above?
FREDERICA: Um-hum, and so Skipper had to--do you know what Skipper had to do?
MIKE: No.
FREDERICA: She had to have something--Barbie had to look for her, and Scooter said, "Hey, where's Skipper?" "I don't know. Maybe Skipper's here somewhere. Let's find her." "Okay, Mommy." So when the dolls started to find Skipper, they didn't find anything.
MIKE: Nothing? Not even a trace?
FREDERICA: They didn't find no Skipper.
CHARLIE: They didn't have any idea where she was?
FREDERICA: Do you know what they thinked? They thinked somebody throwed her away.
MIKE: No, well what actually happened?
FREDERICA: "Mommy, why don't we say we give up? We'll never find Skipper this way." "Don't worry, we'll find her, Scooter. Someplace maybe we can find her. Maybe we can find her in the store." "Do you think Skipper was in the store?"
MIKE: Yes.
FREDERICA: No, she wasn't.
MIKE: She wasn't?
CHARLIE: No, she would have told 'em if she went in the store.
MIKE: That's right.

* * *

The freshmen were just as involved with the story on their level as the second graders had been when they began jumping out of their seats to measure the size of Frederica's dollhouse. After they had heard the tape, Clive asked the class to characterize the narrator. Even though the students gradually recognized the emphasis of death and decay images in the narrative, they continued to think of Frederica as a normal, active, well-liked child and were amazed to hear that she is a shy, sickly, outcaste. I suppose the happiness of the tone and the capacity of the characters to survive without hurt disguised for them whatever of Frederica herself is reflected in the story. With Clive's help, the class was able to find humorous wordplay, comic piling-up of details, concern with precise figures, exaggeration, and ellipsis in the narrative. The evening class, after a pep-talk in which we told them that they could feel free to hate the story and/or consider it useless, responded positively to the piece and was fascinated with the way in which Frederica is superior to her interrogators. Her attitude toward the interviewers is responsive, but her story is influenced by them only when their suggestions appeal to her.

In the afternoon we went on to the Elephant tape of seven-year-olds responding to the question: "If you could have any pet in the world, what kind of pet would you want?":

INTERVIEWER: If you could have any pet in the world, what kind of pet would you want, #1?
#2: I'd want a wolf.
#1: A mouse.
INT: You're not afraid of mice?
#1: No.
#2: How about a dead mouse? You'd catch him in traps.
#1: No, I can't do that.
INT: How come you'd like a mouse?
#2: So you could scare your grandmother?
#1: No. Because I could show it to my grandmother and daddy. That's why.
#3: Oh. And you could scare the boys that doesn't like you?
#1: Well, sometimes I get scared of them but not very much.
#3: Yeah, boys like mice. Or we might take it away from you and scare you the other way.
INT: If you could have a pet, what would you want -- a mouse?
#3: No, I'd take a nice big elephant -- nobody's mess with me. They'd get stomped on if they messed with me.
#1: They're too big to be in a house.
#2: I'd have a pet rattlesnake.
#1: Because the house is too small.
INT: Did you ever hear that elephants are scared of mice?
#2: They aren't.
#3: Well, mine wouldn't be; if he did, he'd get two shots for his pet shot. He wouldn't be scared of shots. I'd make 'em give me a perfect thing that's not scared of anything all your life. And he has horns all over him except when I--where I seat--sit. And if anybody tries to beat him up, he get--they get stuck. Right in the heart. He never misses the heart. That would be his biggest part. Nobody'd mess with me then. I'd be rich, too. I would be rich. I'd be rich--
INT: Where would you get the money?
#3: I'd say--I'll say--"You want this elephant? Pay me two hundred dollars." I'd say, "That was a joke, son. That was a joke." And I'd take the money. Then I'd go to Hollywood and do everything--I'd do it all over the world. And the next thing I know, I'd be richer than anybody. Except movie stars.
#2: You'd end up with one penny after you buy all that candy.
#3: I wouldn't buy any candy. I'd buy--I'd buy a nice good castle; and have so many servants, they would bow down when I walk down, I say, "Go kill that mouse and bring him over here if I can scare these little girls." Yeah, that would be fun.
#2: Yeah, throw dead mice in girl's face; stuff 'em in the mouth.
#3: Ooh, that would be fun.
#2: Yeah.

When the class read the transcript before hearing the tape, they did pretty well at recreating the voices, all, that is, except the tonal quality of Grover, Junior's voice (#3). Everyone, including Carolyn, characterized Junior as a potentially aggressive child who is constantly overwhelmed by the strong-men or mean-men around him. Hearing Junior's voice modified that judgment almost to extinction; I suspect that Junior's desire to have a perfect and indestructible thing reflects the child's response to a world which he cannot control and is any child's response, not Junior's alone because he is Negro, though few children would be so eloquent.

As a writing assignment growing out of our consideration of these two tapes, we asked them to write a fable (cf. Dinesen's fables in Out of Africa) or to write a personal essay about a real wish of theirs and to keep the writing honest.

In the evening class Clive also asked members of the group to read the parts of the Elephant tape, but he suggested to them first that the transcript might have been made up by himself. He played the Voice Project Staff reading the transcript which confirmed their suspicions that this was a Miller-manufacture and proceeded to criticize Clive for attempting and failing to capture the voices of children. There was quite a bit of thinly disguised hostility in their voices as they attacked Clive as a writer. They were ready with all sorts of explanations of why and how Clive used illogic to create these voices. When they discovered that the transcript is, in fact, of the children themselves, they turned their criticism of Clive's writing into a recognition that straight transcription of conversation does not sound or read like conversation and that it does not bring across the personalities of the speakers with any fullness or accuracy. No one has yet ventured to say how one can transform what he hears into significant writing -- it is quite possible that even after one had intuitively succeeded in doing so and then in verbalizing about doing it, no one else would be able to imitate that process. Ultimately, some one in the Voice Project should be trying to find some solutions to this problem if the tapes of the children are to be of the greatest possible use. Even if nobody comes up with some magic formula (and I don't expect them to), tentative answers to this problem could be provocative. (Granted, work with the Wakabayashi tape has been directly aimed at dealing with this problem; our section has been rather backward about using this material -- the students rebel.)

III. WORK IN THE SCHOOLS

WORK IN THE SCHOOLS

One of our major aims in the Voice Project was to have Stanford freshmen working in the local schools as teachers of writing. Our hope was that the college students would be able to pass on what they had learned in Voice Project classes and that they would, in turn, learn about language and voice by teaching younger students. The work in the schools was intended to engage the freshmen actively in their education and to break down the traditional passive role of college students. We also hoped that the introduction of college students and writer-teachers into the public schools might assist the public school teacher in the development of new classroom ideas about writing. Lastly, we felt that our work with elementary and secondary school students would result in knowledge about language and writing that could be implemented in the college classroom.

In this phase of the Voice Project we encountered a microcosm of the American school: bored, restless students; energetic and gifted students; curricula based on questionable categorization of students; versatile teachers willing to experiment. We learned that we could not teach younger students how to write by teaching the skills of writing only. "As I explained the other night, those kids, if they had their wish, would never go to class if they didn't have to." "The key word in our teaching at Terman I think should be 'inspiration'." "This is what Stanford freshmen felt almost at once. One Stanford graduate assistant said of the public school class she worked in: "Our's was a 'medium performance level' class. Most of them (the students) consider themselves stupid in the eyes of the junior high academic world."

Throughout the year the Voice Project students and staff attempted to use the concept of personal voice to generate writing which is characterized by precision, clarity and excitement; and to help the younger students they worked with to deal with individual problems which affected their class work, even though some of these problems were not confined to or caused by school. Thus, our focus was upon the individual student, his personal identity, and his subsequent self-expression of that identity in his writing. Below are a few observations made by a Stanford freshman and a Voice Project writer-teacher concerning some of the public school teachers and students we worked with:

> November 22
>
> Chris and I and Mr. Litwak and Steve went to Cubberley today for our first session with the high schoolers. We all began by writing about "What I hate most" and emerged with numerous different methods of approaching the topic. I had a hard time with mine because it became so personal. The kids in the class seem really bright but high school-y. Most refreshing (says Josephine College). I hope we can gain an informality and rapport which will allow sincere and forthright criticism. It's a great idea and I love it.
>
> In class at Stanford we discussed "The Secret Sharer" by recording, bit by bit, a summary of the story's action and ending with the yet unanswered question "What do Leggatt and the capt. share?" Then we wrote a brief analysis. This is similar to what we did with the kids this morning --comparing the written statement with a spontaneous verbal treatment of the same topic. Very revealing, voice-wise.
>
> --Helen Williams
> Stanford student

Richard Brandon teaches a class composed of second and third grade students. Each student is in the process of writing his own book --- that is, every day he communicates with Mr. Brandon by means of his notebook; and Mr. Brandon corrects each student's spelling, punctuation and grammar and writes a reply of his own after each student's message. But a student's writing book cannot indicate all of a child's talents. Often it does not contain even an expression of individual personality, the unique voice which gives that child an identity among others of his age. Consequently, Richard Brandon is conducting experiments to find out how to use a tape recorder in various helpful ways.

When he first announced to his class that they were going to make recordings, he presented the project to them in the form of a game: Did they think they would be able to identify their classmates' voices? One of the children suggested that it would be easy enough -- all one would have to do would be to memorize the order in which the students left the room. However, by running the recording reel forward and backward between individual taping sessions, Mr. Brandon was able to shuffle the order of voices around. Another child offered a more interesting preliminary observation. This boy, David, remarked that all the voices would sound the same. When asked why, he answered that the tape recorder is a machine and that a machine makes everybody alike. Almost immediately he qualified his remark and a discussion ensued over what exactly David had said. Mr. Brandon pointed out that if they had been using a tape recorder right at that moment, they would be able to play it back now and listen to David's exact words. Finally, David decided that what he intended to say was that every boy would sound alike and every girl would sound alike on a tape recorder. Mr. Brandon wrote this conjecture on the blackboard in front of the class. So the project became for everyone not only a game, but a scientific experiement, too, to see whether what David said was valid.

Six students, leaving and returning one by one to the room, recorded their voices by reading the same paragraph from an easy book. After the six children recorded their voices, Richard Brandon himself read the same paragraph into the microphone; and the machine was wheeled into the room to test David's observation.

In general, the students were able to identify the voices. When the class heard Richard Brandon's recorded voice, they immediately reacted: "Oh, I know that voice! Mr. Brandon!" But then a couple of students realized there were two other adults present, John Hawkes and myself. Strangely, they changed their minds and shouted, "No, it's Mr. Miller!" Then a couple of others claimed, "It's Mr. Hawkes!" Mr. Brandon told them whose voice it was. And the question was raised of why they had guessed Mr. Hawkes or Mr. Miller when not one of the students had heard our voices yet. But they had heard us, the class claimed, when we had asked to see their writing books. Their reactions were surprising not only because John Hawkes and I had whispered rather than spoken out loud to them, but also because my New York accent was unique in this classroom community. It could hardly be confused with Richard Brandon's Californian "open" tones. Mr. Brandon said to the class, "Well, someday we'll have to tape Mr. Hawkes and Mr. Miller and see whether you can distinguish their voices." At this point John Hawkes motioned that we could do it now, Richard Brandon agreed, and -- still not having spoken out loud -- John Hawkes and I left the room.

When we returned, John Hawkes privately suggested to Richard Brandon that he replay the recording of his own voice as well as ours. This Richard Brandon did, inserting his own voice between mine and John Hawkes'.

Significantly, the children laughed while hearing my voice on the tape recorder, and many of them turned in my direction. When they heard Richard Brandon's voice (for the second time -- after having been informed only five minutes earlier whose voice it was), about half the class cried Mr. Brandon and half Mr. Hawkes. After John Hawkes' voice was played, the majority of the class became confused. Because by now they had abandoned their audial perceptiveness in favor of logic: they reasoned that since only two of us had left the room, Mr. Brandon could not possibly own one of these voices. Thus, two of the children guessed that the first voice was mine, the second was Mr. Hawkes', and the third was mine again (but this time disguised). I suspect that these children had never before heard a New York accent, at least not coming out of a person they had met in the flesh. I would have liked to have asked them where they thought I came from -- what country, what continent -- but the subject was not then pursued. Instead, we again discussed David's preliminary observation. He concluded that the machine had not made all the boys sound alike, that it had even reproduced the individual voices rather faithfully. But he insisted that it had changed his voice, and that the voice he heard now was nothing like the voice he was used to hearing.

--Clive Miller
Voice Project Writer-Teacher

November 23

We continued with the "what I hate most" themes in class today. I'm beginning to recognize their writing styles. Old Bob especially with his mechanical mind and work; Sue and her learned voice which somehow strangely comes down to genuine conversational tone in her writing; Andy, almost the direct opposite when comparing voice with written work, Ruth and Jill and their hesitant talent, unhappy Mike who is so close and so far away from something, Lisa possibly the most talented of them all.

--Helen Williams

We listened to John Wakabayashi tell the class about a visit he had made to a glacier during a recent camping vacation he and his family had taken in the state of Washington. Nobody else in the class knew what a glacier was, and John took great verbal delight in describing it to them. When he said the word huge, he meant it -- a gigantic hu-u-uge glacier. He showed a far more sophisticated command of language than he had ever shown in his writing books. He described the glacier as being "as thick as this room is high." He talked about walking along a path 175 feet distant from the glacier, and because he could not touch the ice mountain he got angry and threw rocks at it. When he spoke of a rainstorm at night, he relived the experience, making use of a variety of gestures which enthralled and excited his audience as few storytellers his age can. He was precise in details. He knew exactly what routes he and his family had traveled, which routes led into which, and he could trace them without trouble on a map. After he had finished, when I asked him how he remembered all the roads, he answered that he loves to read maps. He read them so much on this trip, he said, that his mother kept yelling at him, "Put down that map!"

Unfortunately, when John Wakabayashi writes, he buries his personality under a mass of statistics. The verbal ingenuity, the excitement, the sense of immediacy disappears; and all that remains is the straight penmanship, the infinite precision. Possibly at this age he is interested more in how to form the letters of words than in how to use them. But the hope is that somehow the many voices coming out of John Wakabayashi in his oral narration can be combined with the precision and care that are found in his written one; that his creative, individual verbal response to experience will not be subverted by a mechanical, voiceless prose....

--Clive Miller

November 29

Today at Cubberley we began by writing the way we did in V.P. last Wednesday, on "Suddenly, I am something" -- anything, far-fetched, close at hand, real or fantastic. Their results were really exceptional, I thought, more natural and skillfully done than the week before. Jill wrote on the implications arising from being or becoming a slab or rock merging with the unchanging surface of the earth; and then if she crumbled, so what. Ruth's was about being a floor. She remembered all the things she had done to floors -- scuffs, scrapes, bits of glass left after a broken bottle. She said she intended no double meaning or depth to it, in other words, no big persecution complex or something (my inferences are always so far out). Mike wrote about waking up in an insane asylum. It was good but more like the beginning of a novel than a short expression on its own. Why is it that we can never find anything to say about Mike's writing? Lisa wrote an interesting piece on being a director. It was good as far as reproducing conversations goes but not as creative as I somehow expect from her.

--Helen Williams

November 30

We passed out dittoed copies of a sports article by Dick Young, in which he compares the war in Vietnam to a tied football game, and we asked the Cubberley students for their reactions:

"... The thing that really bugs me about all this isn't a football game, or a national title or a rating in a poll. It's the thinking that is taking over in this country, this once invincible country. We are being taught the glories of a stalemate. You see it in football. You saw it in Korea. You are seeing it in Vietnam. You used to hear, Go get 'em, win this thing! Now you hear, Hold on to that ball, don't lose...."

--Dick Young

ABOUT DICK YOUNG

Mike: small man, fighting things always, can't understand people who don't want to win; tendency toward aggressive duels with people.

Lisa: typical middle class; high on school spirit; school spirit leads to patriotism. Associates with the young. Doesn't want to let go.

Jill: aggressive, pushy; compensation; hasn't changed since when he was young; same problems. Would have liked to be on the inside, but never was.

Bob: not a star, but maybe second-string. Breezy about the whole thing. Confidence in what he's saying. Happy in his life, writing, work.

Cindy: too idealistic in his thoughts to have really known war.

Lisa: winning spirit; war and games. "We are being taught the glories of a stalemate" -- Commie conspiracies.

Bob: light, airy, not meaning it, funny.

Cindy: indignant

Ruth: cynical

Susie: ridiculous

It was a good, quick class. Everyone, or almost (Cindy, Sue, Bob) got very inspired and spoke a lot. It's good when they really say what they think.

--Helen Williams

In Jean Style's first grade class, the children are just beginning to read and write. Every learned literary nuance and inspired critical perception must be traced back to here, to a book entitled Tom and Betty. Its sentence structure and thought process are so simple and unsophisticated in comparison with the children's own speech that the book appears imbecile. It is an instrument in the mechanics of teaching a child how to read. Yet it is foreign to the child's point of view and his unique forms of expression; its total toneless quality is in sharp contrast to the child's living personality and sensitivity which must grow, at least survive.

On the day John Hawkes and I visited Jean Style's classroom, two students got up in front of the class and sang songs. One of the girls sang a song she had learned last year in kindergarten, and others who had been in that class with her soon joined in. The other girl -- Debbie, a Negro with pigtails -- sang a song with a more liberated rhythm. The class was entranced. The lyrics went something like: "You can talk about your peaches, you can talk about your pears. You can talk about your 'simmons on the 'simmon tree. Just give me that watermelon on the vine! Hambone ---- hngh! Hambone --- hngh!" After every Hambone, she gave a belly-bump.

Whether or not she and the class knew (and they obviously did not) that this was the exact kind of song one would expect a little pickaninny to sing in any Hollywood movie which had swung out of the 1930's or jived away the early '40's, they were delighted with the song and Debbie's special performance. And not knowing a history of humiliation and so, too, not knowing satire in this particular form, they were able to enjoy the song for the most honest of reasons -- its rhythm, its images, and the expertness of the singer communicating them. My assumption is that this child's sincerity and individuality is worth retaining.

--Clive Miller

What follows is an essay by one of the teaching assistants, a selection of log entries kept by freshmen and teaching assistants, papers and revisions written by the school students, and evaluations and suggestions by the Stanford freshmen.

SECTION 51. (JOHN HAWKES AND ZEESE PAPANIKOLAS) AT CUBBERLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Teaching at Cubberley

by Zeese Papanikolas

I wanted to accomplish two things during the first quarter of Voice Project work at Cubberley. The first was to establish a critical vocabulary that we could all understand and use to deal with the work we would be reading and writing, and the second was to get the students to feel relaxed about their writing and about the group. Of course the two goals are not mutually exclusive, and I tried to design units which would move toward both of them. Perhaps something should be said about the "I" of this piece: first of all, I'm going to use that pronoun because I feel comfortable with it and because this is a personal document and written from a personal bias; second; it is largely accurate, for although I did want the Stanford freshmen to assist in planning and actually to conduct most of the units of this experiment, I found that they felt uncomfortable teaching students so nearly their own ages, and due to the informality of the class, felt at times a little threatened by the acuteness of the Cubberley students. Thus the second quarter I took on the ceremonial role of teacher in what was in effect a mixed class of high school sophomores and college freshmen. And while this would seem a hybrid and artificial situation, it was in fact just the opposite. The age difference between college and high school students became insignificant, what had been a noticeable awkwardness in their relationships with each other disappeared, and class argument and discussion became at once more friendly and more intense. I even got considerably more suggestions about things to try than when I had attempted to turn over planning of the class to the Stanford students, and at one point I even let a Cubberley student -- Mike Mayer -- plan and conduct what turned out to be a perfectly sound class. So when I use the first person pronoun, I am using it in conjunction with units which I introduced (though not necessarily created) and largely taught.

The essentials of the "critical vocabulary" I have spoken of are the concepts of narrator (or story-teller), audience, drama/dramatic, and narrative. Of course the idea of voice is intimately associated with all of these concepts, and the idea of subject, or, as I put it at times, of having a story to tell, is perhaps central. We began the real work of the class then by telling a story. This idea isn't necessarily new and had been tried with some success by Robert Weston at Stanford. We divided the class in half, and all faced each other in two rows with the tape recorder between. Side A. were story-tellers, and each individual was bound to compose spontaneously a story until someone on Side B, either out of spite or boredom or reasons more complicated said the word "Stop." The next person in line, at that point, had to pick up the story immediately and continue it until he himself was silenced. The story was wild and exciting and everyone had fun telling it. Immediately after we'd run out of inventions, I asked the class what they thought they'd hear when we listened to the tape, what they'd noticed about the telling. Most of the ideas became the basis for the quarter's work. The class found that they said "stop" for a lot of reasons. Sometimes it increased the suspense, sometimes it put an end to a tedious or confused episode, sometimes it was a sign of total excitement -- the story couldn't possibly be any funnier -- or it registered total disbelief or disapproval. In short, the "stop" was as creative a tool, did as much to "make" the story as the sheer velocity of ideas and inventions. I suggested that it is the combination of "stop" and "go," the effective use of both the critical and creative faculties

-- and I'm not so sure you can separate them in the first place. Kathy made an interesting comment, one that I built much on: when the story-teller became confused or ran out of ideas while telling a story, the whole thing began to sound "just like a big fib." But wasn't the story-telling session just a big fib from beginning to end, I asked. This idea -- the idea of the truth of a story as having something more to it than mere factuality -- was almost the theme of the first few weeks at Cubberley.

The next session introduced the idea of voice to the class. We came with the tape of the story-telling session, as well as a transcript of one of the more interesting moments:

> KATHY: -you know people still got married in these days- they didn't get past this stage- and to make a good pair all the children in the family had to spell one name. You know, they all- it was ridiculous! Anyway, well, so the thing is- this got to be too much, y'know, 'cause all these words were made up that were just absolutely- they didn't mean anything- and the people started fighting each other about whose word was best and we had these little inner family wars and outer family wars and pretty soon....
>
> KATHY A.: Pretty soon because everybody was killed having all these family wars and everything they killed everybody off and so they no longer ...
>
> DAN: Okay, there were- everybody was killed off except for one person who was the Greek fisherman. The Greek fisherman saw what he had done and he saw everybody was dead. And this upset him greatly. And this was all his fault in the first place for finding this ancient Greek artifact. And....
>
> * * * * * *
>
> ALYSSA: They all arranged a large squadron of bats to go out and bite the fisherman but it just so happened that the fisherman was by the seashore that day and he was walking along the shore- this was before the bats came and found him- he was walking along the shore and all of a sudden you know this big wave came and it washed a flounder up on the shore. And he looked at the flounder and he picked it up and he didn't turn it over because he thought that wouldn't really be nice because then it couldn't see him, you see. So he looked at it and then he decided he was going to throw it back. And then all of a sudden a bird flew by and snatched the flounder out of his hand and flew over and dropped it in for him- and he decided that this was a very profound thing. So immediately he decided he was going to, you know, leave his house and move to the seashore so he could watch these animals instead. And so he moved to the seashore in a cave, and it turned out that this was the same cave that the bats had just left....
>
> LARRY: Well, we're going to start a new civilization with completely different government and new laws and everything -- a new language -- and we're going to eventually take over the world. And when we get enough strength we will just sort of spread out like the Roman Empire but we'll get even larger until even the strongest countries can't stop us.

The stories told by Kathy, Alyssa and Larry really do succeed in imposing a personal view of things, a personal voice on materials that were in general pretty slap-dash and, on a second hearing, unusually similar: we were all trying to make the audience laugh, and resorted, many of us, to some rather corny parody and television-like comedy routines. But Kathy's story about the alphabet people seemed, at this moment, to transcend this kind of humor, or rather, to use it so well that you really did get a sense of her own zany vitality and essential seriousness -- for the alphbet-people story is serious -- and Alyssa's story about the fisherman and the flounder has a delicateness and grace and depth that is like her quiet voice, and Larry's story had a measured control, and steady gravity that was really the beginning of allegory. An important part of this day was a comparison of the transcript with the recorded telling, for the transcript represented for the most part a loss of much of the rhythm and inflection -- the vocal energies -- which make one person's voice, and the particular humanity in that voice, unique. Much of the excitement and humor in Kathy's story are muddled by the raw transcription of her words alone, while Larry might be read as halting and confused on the page, when in fact he sounds quite definite in the actual telling. The question was, how to recapture the heard story in a written language. It was a question which we worried about all quarter.

Out of Kathy's observation about story-telling and fib grew a whole series of assignments. I wanted on the one hand to get the students writing as far-fetched and imaginative material as possible, for I hoped this would relax their writing and allow them to make some discoveries about their talents, since fantasy was relatively safe territory. Their egos and ideas, I felt, would not appear to be so much on the spot if we began with the invented; on the other hand, I wanted to pursue this idea of "literary" truth versus mere factuality. A few assignments: tell a convincing lie. Everyone here was so self-conscious and careful that all the stories were suspect. Alyssa did just what I hoped someone would do: she wrote a far-fetched thing about her uncle being shot through the shoulder by an arrow which turned out to be true. Tell the truth. No one did this assignment. Write a personal vision of the End of the World. This was perhaps the best assignment of the quarter, in terms of student response. I had wanted to avoid giving models or examples of assignments, since I felt the students would merely imitate them, and I wanted to see their own work. Yet they may have at times felt at a loss about assignments, or not have known how seriously you could treat them. The solution, I found, was to give several models, to show the range of ideas a particular assignment could contain. Thus, for the End of the World we had three sources: a passage from William Burroughs' The Naked Lunch, which we had worked on earlier in the quarter; a poem by Irving Feldman, a young New York poet (and a friend of mine); and finally the Book of Revelation, Chapter 9.

> Rock and Roll adolescent hoodlums storm the streets of all nations. They rush into the Louvre and throw acid in the Mona Lisa's face. They open zoos, insane asylums, prisons, burst water mains with air hammers, chop the floor out of passenger plane lavatories, shoot out lighthouses, file elevator cables to one thin wire, turn sewers into the water supply, throw sharks and sting rays and electric eels into swimming pools, in nautical costumes ram the Queen Mary full speed into New York Harbor, play chicken with passenger planes and busses, rush into hospitals in white coats carrying saws and axes and scalpels three feet long, throw paralytics out of iron lungs (mimic their suffocations flopping about on the floor and rolling their eyes up), administer injections with bicycle pumps, disconnect artificial kidneys and saw a woman in half with a two-man surgical saw.
>
> --William Burroughs
> The Naked Lunch*

Here were wildly different materials in which an imagined situation, a vision of the future, was the vehicle for making quite personal and, with the exception perhaps of Burroughs, "true" statements about the condition of man today. We spent a good deal of time working with the examples, and then the students wrote, all of them seriously and most of them well. I've closen Alyssa's piece as an example first of all because it is a fine piece of writing, and second because in it I think you can see the development of a voice and a mind that were incipient in the spontaneous story:

> No one knows why it happened -- perhaps because no one is left. Maybe life got tired of living, for man never got anywhere: he had fluctuated between good and bad, but he never made any permanent good change which continued in development.
>
> So on what should have been a lovely spring day, day didn't dawn. No light anywhere -- and all machines ceased to work. A frosty, cold mist began to settle, quite slowly. By now people began to get excited and upset. Some ran out of doors, others huddled up in corners to escape the darkness.
>
> The mist became cloudy, thick, and dark. It penetrated even the most sealed areas, enveloping everything. And every animal it reached dropped senseless into a small crumpled heap -- sleeping blissfully, with a peaceful but idiotic expression on its face.

---

*Reprinted by permission from Naked Lunch, by William Burroughs, published by Grove Press, Inc. Copyright (c) 1959 by Grove Press.

> The mist lasted for two whole revolutions of the earth. Then, suddenly the laws of gravity were no more, or seemed not to be, for a great gale arose, and blew away the mist, carrying with it all the dreaming bodies. Floating, whirling through the air they became as shades and shadows only; then they vanished.
>
> The gale and loss of gravity somehow had also managed to fling off all man-made structures from the earth, but the plants and waters remained. The earth had shook off the poisoning growth upon her. Then day came.
>
> --Alyssa Hess

In working with all of these fictions, we found these ideas: that what is true is largely what is convincing in some fundamental way, either intellectually or aesthetically -- because it is pleasing, dramatic -- or true in even the crude visceral sense of being something author and reader both know, a concrete detail taken from the world of sensations and experiences which is common property. Larry's lie about witnessing a holdup on University Avenue is circumstantial, plausible -- and psychologically unconvincing: there is no human response here, no excitement. Mike's lie about searching for a lost brother in a men's room at the White House and running into Hubert Humphrey is an improvement: at least there's a story here, something convincing because it is unusual, worth telling. Jim Wright, in a *tour de force* in-class revision of Mike's piece gets rid of the gratuitous lost kid brother and inserts in his place an excruciating description of being on a guided tour when the only place one wants to visit is a bathroom: "God it was hot. We saw the Red room, the Blue Room, the Green Room...." Even if we haven't seen Washington D.C. *that* is someplace we've all been; and not only does Jim's story have this kind of reality to it, but it has a moral: even Vice Presidents have kidneys -- a story still more worth telling. Finally, I tried to communicate to the class a sense for another kind of "truth" in fiction, the psychic, mythical reality of certain images and figures: the flounder Alyssa's fisherman turns over, Larry's utopian "new civilization," the mountains of snow and ice into which Kafka's Bucket Rider -- we read the short story by the same title as an example of a highly serious fantasy -- disappears.

The pieces of writing done and studied at Cubberley which I have been talking about so far have been narratives or essays -- I found it convenient not to distinguish between the two at this time, but to include both of them in the primitive but useful word "story" -- the idea you are trying to get across, the event you are trying to relate. But we did work with drama also -- not as a genre, but as a technique, a certain set of relations between author and audience of which in fact both narrative and essay writers can make use. We began here in a fashion much like that with which we began the narrative section, by producing some spontaneous dramas. Here we gave only the sketchiest casting as a beginning, for example, "mother and daughter" which produced the remarkable dialogue between Georgia (as mother) and Donna, and Larry and Dan's lively version of what happens when "an old man crowds in front of a young man while waiting for a bus" -- this last idea was, incidentally, suggested by Jerome Bruner, with whom we talked about our story transcript:

MOTHER: I don't think you should be able to go out if you don't show respect. You don't do things around the house; you just stay out all night. You like to go to parties and stuff. Well, this is fine, but until you show you can be helpful in the home you're not to go out on Saturday night. To start you can clean up your room more often...

DAUGHTER: My room's always clean.

MOTHER: Oh, uh-huh, uh-huh. Checked under the bed, under the rug lately? No. Okay. You can do dishes after dinner, you can plan meals, make meals, it's a very responsible--when _I_ was a child, years ago it may be, I wasn't out past nine thirty.

DAUGHTER: Yes, but times have changed. _Everybody_ stays out past ten thirty now.

MOTHER: What do they do?

DAUGHTER: We just go to the movie, or dance or something--I mean, why can't I stay past ten thirty?

MOTHER: Because in your position you are a girl. Girls live a sheltered life. I led a sheltered life; all your other friends are leading a sheltered life, living a sheltered life. And I think this is good because the boys around your age are starting to get other ideas, more than just going to the movies. And it's best for your protection to keep you at home.

DAUGHTER: You can lead a sheltered life and stay out until eleven o'clock at least.

MOTHER: Not when all the activities close at ten fifteen.

DAUGHTER: Well, I mean, there's plenty of places open past ten thirty.

* * *

YOUNG MAN: Hey, mister, what do you think you're doing?

OLD MAN: * * * * bus * * * *

YOUNG MAN: Apparently you'd rather stand than go to the end of the line.

OLD MAN: Young man, I'm forty years your senior. Who do you think you are? pushing me around...

YOUNG MAN: Look, I've been waiting for twenty minutes already and you should have to wait, too.

OLD MAN: Well, I have to get on the bus there; I have to get home. Somebody's waiting there for me -- a very important visitor.

YOUNG MAN: It doesn't matter what you're doing or what you have to do either. Wait in line.

OLD MAN: Young man, I'm your elder.

YOUNG MAN: That doesn't make any difference.

OLD MAN: It does!

YOUNG MAN: I can beat you up any day.

OLD MAN: Young man, are you advocating violence?

YOUNG MAN: Well, I don't want to, but if you don't get out of line I might have to.

(Strife.)

YOUNG MAN: Will you calm down, sir!

The two things I wanted to do with the dramas were, again, to talk about the verbal gestures which a raw transcript often fails to suggest, and about the spoken language in general, and then to get at the dramatic technique. Thus we saw in Georgia's creation of the angry mother a language, a style of speaking which was in itself an equivalent of the concrete detail which we spoke of as so necessary to establish the "truth" of a story -- the mother's "Well, this is fine" -- just this scrap of a sentence establishes for me, at least, her reality and the quality of the dramatic situation.... The sheer reality of her voice creates a whole character. And in this kind of reality is for me the essence of how drama works. The narrator is, by his method, by the words he chooses, his rhythms, telling us what his feelings toward the events and ideas he's presenting are, telling us, sometimes quite explicitly, how _we_ should think and feel.

Yet in drama there is of course no narrator to guide our response, only a situation out of which we must extrapolate emotionally and intellectually the right ideas, the right feelings. Thus the audience of the crude kind of narrative we have been talking about is passive, lets the narrator/author mold and direct his responses, while between the audience of the drama and the thing shown there is established a real tension: the author does his best to remain hidden, to let the action of the play speak for itself, while the audience is continually trying to judge the words and actions of the drama, continually shifting in its attitudes as the play unfolds. Of course, I am talking here of a very crude idea of drama and narrative. A good dramatist often does, through one of his characters, speak directly to the audience, include narrative in his play, and both the best fictions and essays are highly dramatic and do let the actions and ideas speak for themselves. (We were interested to notice how the spontaneous group story kept wanting to become dialogue and drama when we listened to the tape we'd made of it.) But another way a fiction is dramatic has to do with point of view, the distance the narrator imposes between himself and his materials, and the judgment implicit in this distance.

Miss Carolyn Fitchett, a Voice Project consultant, visited our class late in the winter quarter and we worked at the idea of chamber theater -- a technique for dramatizing point of view. We began with a story told us by Kim Dunster: she and another girl are in an isolated cabin of a student ship going to Europe. It is night. They hear noises at the door, men talking, and are frightened. The next morning they discover that some students have removed the number on the cabin door for a prank. The next step was to dramatize the story. Georgia was chosen narrator/director and she created a play out of Kim's materials on the spot, setting the scene, choosing and positioning actors, telling part of the story in her own words and letting the actors tell part in dialogue. We had asked Georgia to assume a definite attitude toward the story and to try to develop that attitude in her "production." After Georgia finished with the story, we attempted to guess what she was trying to do. It was pretty obvious that she was taking an aloof, humorous position here, emphasizing the silliness of the girls.

Kim then directed the story and did a good job of building up the suspense and the real fear of the experience -- she was adopting a point of view nearer to that of the frightened girls in time and emotion. This unit is one which looked better on paper than in practice -- I think the approach here was too structured and perhaps a little young for our students on the one hand, while the idea of point of view itself -- as it works in a piece of fiction, say -- is really quite sophisticated and subtle. But the chamber theater techniques are interesting and certainly deserve more exploitation than the one day our class devoted to them.

Another unit along similar lines dealt with how popular journalism (and advertising) "creates" an audience. A fashion magazine pretends it is addressing itself to a sophisticated, modish creature who probably bears little resemblance to the actual reader, but it is pleasing for the actual reader to pretend she conforms to the magazine ideal. I use the fashion magazine as an example because although I'd asked the students to bring other blatant examples of this kind of trickery, a few fashion magazines were the only things we finally received. It would be fun to follow this thing through in magazines slanted toward men and teenagers and housewives; to try to define the kind of audience even such a general-interest magazine such as Time or Saturday Evening Post is attempting to create.

I've now covered what I think were the main ideas in winter quarter. We did some interesting things, but, as I look back on it, we may have tried to do too much with the techniques of writing, with exposing the fundamentals and developing the basic vocabulary I spoke of earlier - and too little with making the actual writing important in itself. The problem with the kind of units I've outlined above is that they tend to become gimmicky and theoretical in large doses. Although we had many fine moments this first quarter, and produced some good writing, the students were sometimes listless and often confused. And yet I think that working with such intense focus on these techniques in the long run paid off, for it exposed the complexity of the language, and even though there were days of tedium and (it seemed) futility, by the end of the quarter the students were able to use with some skill the ideas of voice and the relationship between author and audience as critical tools.

I had given the students ample opportunity to "get outside themselves" in their writing the first quarter; the second (Spring) quarter I wanted them to look closely at themselves and their world. I wanted to try breaking down a distinction which sometimes obtains between student writing as a piece of work, an artifact to be criticized and what it really is, or should be: an expression of ideas and feelings which are real, and which can be talked about, enlarged, and responded to as experience. Thus we spent a lot of time talking the second quarter. I would introduce a topic into the class -- one I hoped would be important to them -- and we'd talk about it for a moment perhaps, and then write (I should say in-class writing seemed far less painful and produced far better results than "assignments" -- the students wanted to write, almost all of them; they just didn't want to do it at home.) We would read the results aloud and would "teach" one or two of them and then we would talk about the ideas and feelings the writer was dealing with, ideas and feelings which it sometimes turned out, hadn't been successfully or entirely captured in the written work.

One class dealt with pain. I asked the students if they, as middle class Americans in quite comfortable physical circumstances, felt there was pain in their lives, and of what sort. Both Dale Rettig (a Stanford Freshman) and Dan Cahn wrote papers which were interesting enough to duplicate for closer study:

> I feel despair very often - but despair is often characterized as a middle class phenomenon, often caused by selfishness. Real, acute pain for me has come from hate.
>
> I've felt really hated only twice - on the sidewalks of Chicago's south side, where I wished for the first time I could be black, just for a few minutes. And on the streets of Tiajuana, where people saw me as a rich gringo who had come down to ravish their daughters and sisters.
>
> Negroes speak of the hatred they see in the eyes of white men. I've seen the same hatred in the eyes of men standing in their storefronts, as a pimp began to drag me to his whore.
>
> --Dale Rettig

> The only true continuous pain I feel in my life is the pain of the future. Our society has been constructed so that at age 12 one must begin to decide what to do with your life. It can get to a point where you cannot be happy at all because you must worry about time, life, money, grades, "happiness" and all the other cliches of modern society. One must think (worry) about college, raising a family and doing something useful. You must do something useful. You must make something of your life. Goddamnit I don't want to do anything useful. I want to do something to be happy.
>
> --Dan Cahn

Dale seemed to achieve his powerful effects through a direct and controlled voice, through concrete detail and concision: "I've felt really hate only twice - on the sidewalks of Chicago's south side.... and on the streets of Tiajuana.... " Here the direct, definite statements, the "placing" of the incident through the city names, and the parallel constructions gave the piece an authentic, compelling ring. There were, however, some moments of obscurity which tended to work against the directness of the piece: "pain for me has come from hate" - from being hated? or from hating? Although the question is answered by the piece, this kind of initial ambiguity isn't really in keeping with the general clarity and precision we see in most of the language. And are the men "standing in their storefronts" Negro or Mexican? More important, were some failures of voice: the class saw quite early that the word "ravish" was much out of place -- it was "romantic" as one student put it. And "rich gringo" was a cliche which seemed comic and evasive -- Dale's language, rather than the Mexican shop keepers'. The last line is interesting but to me the "as" gave it an oddly dreamlike, indefinite sound, again, out of keeping with the piece as a whole.

Dan's piece on pain had good possibilities, but there were also problems. The pronoun shifts in the piece -- from "I" to "one" to "you" -- seemed to indicate that Dan was uncomfortable not so much with what he had to say, but with how he was saying it. The piece wavers constantly between the forensic of "our society has been constructed so that at age 12 one must begin.... " and the "spoken" "Goddamnit, I don't want to do anything useful." And there was a problem of definition: how was Dan's idea of "happiness" superior to the happiness which he earlier puts ironically in quotation marks and calls a cliche of modern society? We talked about these problems, and also about our own experiences in the light of Dan's paper. Dan is a good talker, and from part of what he had to say (we were taping the class discussion that day) this transcript was made:

DAN: I know yesterday I was thinking everybody has a goal, a job or something like that. But to reach this goal you have to say, work half your life and by that time your goal has probably changed and for all these years you're earning all this money, you probably didn't want to have this money, and so what you're losing is life, suffering for a possibly changing goal which may never come. And I didn't like that, you know, it's unfortunate that everything is based on money, you have to work.

Yeah, the thing is that the most important part of your life is when you get a job, I mean as far as the whole society is concerned, that's the only time you're serving anybody and making yourself useful. It doesn't really do much for me right now. I don't care about later that much right now. It bothers me that I have to, that everything is not as nice as it could be because I have to worry about things to come, things like that.

Even given the spoken roughnesses and imprecisions that all of us fall into in conversation, two things are clear from the transcript: that there is here an underlying consistency of voice and firmness and clarity of expression not really found in the written piece, and that Dan's thought is far more precise and interesting than what reaches us in writing. "What you're losing is life" is a powerful and provocative line, much more real than anything in the written piece. I should say that Dan himself wasn't altogether impressed by this demonstration, and the problem of moving from spoken language to written is one we could only begin to approach. Perhaps merely exposing the two languages and their differences is a start.

We worked along these same lines for most of the quarter, although a great deal of the writing and discussion was hardly this intense. We wrote about fear, parents, and about one of the fathers of the atom bomb who replaced a tortoise he had thoughtlessly picked up in the woods because he had "tampered enough with the universe." The class Mike Mayer planned produced some interesting writing. We had been writing out of verbal stimulants all year, so Mike, for a change, introduced two photographs into the class, one of a young, tee-shirted tough, the other of a huge oak tree. He asked us to write on either picture, or, what interested him more, on a relationship between both pictures. Alyssa gave the boy in the photograph a voice -- she was surprisingly sympathetic toward him -- and her lively monologue became the basis for a short story-in-progress. (Her piece was turned in as an English assignment to her regular class.)

Our final classes were among the most interesting (for me, at least) of the year. We worked with two songs, "You Gotta Bottle Up And Go," a genuine folk-blues by Leadbelly, and Bob Dylan's sophisticated "Outlaw Blues". These same materials had been used a week earlier in Jack Hawkes' Gunn High school class, and I wanted to see what my students would do with them. We talked about words of the Leadbelly song first, without listening to the sung version. Here I was at pains to bring out the precision of the emotions being expressed. Although there is no "story" here, it's easy to tell what Leadbelly thinks of women from such lines as "She may be old, 90 year/ She ain't too old for to shift them gear." There is an affectionate, humorous, but nevertheless hard-headed irony working all through the song, even though much of it is certainly spontaneous and unclear.

We turned to the Dylan song and an interesting thing happened: the students didn't recognize the song or its composer from the printed sheet, and so we were able to get a quite unbiased judgment of the materials. They found that it was hard to tell what Dylan's song was about. While Leadbelly had been precise, Dylan was diffuse. A line like "Ain't it hard to stumble/ And land in some funny lagoon" seems to mean something, but the closer you approach it, the more vague it becomes. The verse beginning "I got my dark sun glasses.... " was entirely mystifying. We listened to the sung versions of these two songs and talked about the singers and their work, and about the advantages and disadvantages of separating a song from its music. The class didn't think "Outlaw Blues" was one of Dylan's better songs, so at their suggestion we spent a day on "The Times They Are A - Changing." The syntax of the last lines of this song is badly tortured for the sake of rhyme, and I was able to show how this departure from the comfortable syntax of regular spoken and written English "hurt" the stanza -- the awkwardness was working against the rhetorical bite the lines should have had. This was the one moment of the year when a lesson in grammar coincided with a lesson in voice.

We also asked who Dylan's audience was in the song. The song pretends to be addressed to the "leaders" of the world -- or, as one student put it, to the adults. It was a "challenge." But I wondered whether the song wasn't in fact addressed to Dylan's own generation, and that far from being a challenge, he was merely telling that generation what it wanted to hear, congratulating it. These questions weren't answered, of course, but I find it exciting to deal seriously with the materials of our own culture -- that part of the culture that is truly popular. During this same series of classes I read "protest" poems by Yeats, Blake, and by an English poet, Henry Reed. We discussed these poems only briefly, but I think our work with the Dylan and Leadbelly songs prepared the class to listen to these poems and to think about them. At any rate, I am sure I was able to teach the class more about poetry through Dylan and Leadbelly than I would have through more conventional channels.

I enjoyed my few months at Cubberley, and especially the last months, a great deal, and I think most of the Stanford people did also. Were I to do it again, I would mix the kind of work we did the first quarter with the more informal and personal discussion and writing sessions of the last. And I'd probably play more Bob Dylan.

SECTION 51. (JOHN HAWKES AND ZEESE PAPANIKOLAS) AT GUNN HIGH SCHOOL. LOG EXCERPTS BY HELENE ZIMNICKI (Stanford Freshman).

March 8, 1967

Jack chose a passage from one of our own class papers to use as an illustration of changes of voice, and we took it to Gunn. We first passed out dittoed copies of the paragraph -- an introduction to a poetry reading that a Stanford freshman had quoted in a paper she wrote. Jack had originally been disturbed by the passage because of the radical shifts of voice he found in it, and he wanted the Gunn students to be able to detect these changing voices. Barbara read the passage aloud:

> Two summers ago I had the privilege of being an exchange student in Germany. That was the summer of sweet ironies, of joy and sorrow, pain

> and pleasure, alienation and belonging, of heights and depths of emotions and ideas. It was the summer of my growing up and also of chances for growing passed by because of my hesitancy. There was a fullness and richness that I can see now even more clearly than at the time. It was the summer of my becoming...

Elaine started the discussion by asking the Gunn students how many voices they heard in these sentences. For instance, what kind of voice did they hear in the first sentence in "privilege of being." She asked what the difference was between saying "I had the privilege of being" and "I was." Kathy immediately said that the first sentence is unlike the rest of the paragraph because "privilege of being" sounded like a speech, like what every exchange student would say in front of an audience. We had a long discussion on the speech-maker's voice in the first sentence. The Gunn students pointed out that the speaker sounded as if he was talking to the Fulbright Committee, being "thankful" and "humble." Jack called the phrase "privilege of being" part of the "rhetoric of high position." He caught the students up by talking about voice in terms of distance -- of actual spacial relationship:

JACK: I think we're really talking about something that almost has a spatial reality. We can imagine this speaker close to us or far away.

DOUG: You mean in terms of how closely you relate to what he's going to say?

JACK: Yes. And how close is he here? If we say "formal," what does "formal" mean?

DOUG: It means very detached.

JACK: It means detached. And distance, pulling back, pulling away, standing up in front of you -- doesn't all this have something to do with authority?

STEVE: It sounds like he's closer to the ... Fulbright Society, or the Boys' Club of whatever it was, (laughter) than he is to the audience; he's trying to make these people feel good because they sent him to Germany.

JACK: Good. But if it was expressed simply -- "Two summers ago I was in Germany" -- then this distance collapses, doesn't it? This sense of distance, which you might equate here with strain, tension, is undoubtedly related to voice.

Doug then asked what kind of voice the Gunn students heard in the second sentence and whether it clashed with the first:

DOUG: What about the next sentence? What kind of voice would you say that is? What kind of feeling do you think he's attempting to relate? How personal is he?

STEVE: He's pouring himself out into the audience, and he's doing it all in one sentence.

GIRL: Which? The next sentence?

STEVE: The second one.

GIRL: It sort of sounds to me like he sat and planned it beforehand, which sort of ruins the effect. (Talking at once -- laughter)

STEVE: But this is sort of general. I mean, it might be very personal, but it could apply to anybody. Pain and sorrow, joy and pain --

GIRL: You get that whether you go overseas or not.

DOUG: How does that line or that figure of speech -- that "summer of sweet ironies" -- how does that affect you? Do you like it? (Mostly no's)

STEVE: Cliche.

GIRL: Doesn't mean anything.

STEVE: I've heard it somewhere else.

ELAINE: It drips. (Laughter)

JACK: Are you really very tired of it? (Agreement) It makes me cringe. That's not being tired of it.

ELAINE: What do you mean by cringe?

GIRL: He's sick of it.

JACK: I'm not sick of it or tired of it. That phrase gives me ugly feelings in my spine. (Laughter)

STEVE: Like when you look at an art work that's really far out or something, and it's --

GIRL: (softly) It makes you sick. (Laughter)

GIRL: You've seen it about seventy-five times already.

STEVE: Like psychedelic art or something -- you see it all the time, but it's still really -- I don't know. It just jumps out at you or something. And that's what this does to me -- "summer of sweet ironies" -- It just makes me feel funny.

ELAINE: Because it doesn't mean anything, or because it means something?

STEVE: Because I'm not really used to hearing words like that. I have some sort of barrier or something.

DOUG: Well, now, there's a difference. Some people have said that it sounds like a cliche, which means that they've heard it so many times before, yet you say that you've never heard it before.

STEVE: These others words, like joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure -- I've become used to words like these in this kind of context, but "summer of sweet ironies" -- It's far out.

ELAINE: You've never passed a summer that makes you think of "sweet irony"?

STEVE: Maybe so, but just the way it's phrased there --

JACK: I hope you have -- (Laughter)

ELAINE: When you said it made you cringe -- I don't really feel it either --

(Much talking at once -- laughter)

STEVE: It's like when you listen to twelve-tone music by Anton Berg or somebody -- just all these different musicians doing different things at once -- you know, they just mess up your mind. (Laughter) And this is what this does to me.

ELAINE: Like he's trying to say something to sound profound and doesn't really --

GIRL: That's what it is.

STEVE: Because that just catches you up -- right on that word "irony."

GIRL: I think that sentence stands out more, because of the sentence before -- it seems kind of superficial, and he jumps right down into that, and it makes it stand out more, and seem more obvious.

STEVE: Yeah, like two complementary colors next to each other. (Laughter)

JACK: Well, are we saying that "the summer of sweet ironies" achieves the same kind of distance as "privilege of being"? (Many no's)

ELAINE: That's why it's a different voice.

JACK: Exactly. But what's happening to the distance in "summer of sweet ironies"? I suppose you, Steve, got behind "privilege of being," and you said he was feeling very humble. I suppose that "summer of sweet ironies" is really quite related to that feeling that you were talking about.

GIRL: Well, it seems like the first sentence -- he's saying it to a -- I can picture him sitting up on a stage with the Board of Supervisors behind him. He's saying the first sentence to them. In the second sentence he's trying to jump out into the audience, and then by the last sentence he gets there in a little circle of people, and can actually talk to them.

STEVE: And there's really a contrast, because it's like saying the first sentence to a high society queen or something (Laughter), and then talking to peons after that. (Laughter) Right next to each other.

We went on to talk about the rest of the second sentence. Doug said that here the writer was trying to elevate himself by using words like "joy and sorrow," "alienation and belonging," etc., and that what he actually did was to create "pseudo-drama." Joan was good here when she said that he was trying to say that the experience was important to him, but by using these words "he makes it nothing."

Jack asked what the speaker was trying to "give" his listeners, what the "burden" of the passage was. Steve pointed out that the words were addressed not to a special audience, but to everyone, who in the course of even a day might experience joy and sorrow, pain, etc., and that he's simply trying to dramatize his feelings. But, we are embarrassed by his words, and Jack tried to show why and how the embarrassment takes place. We are, he said "buffeted" by the first two sentences, which are two different voices and speaking from different levels of involvement. He described the "privilege of being" as "lofty statesmanship," and said that "sweet ironies" is still elevated. The "burden" of the passage turned out to be a burden of feeling, too much feeling; the language doesn't control the emotions of the experience.

Jean objected to the phrase "summer of my growing up" in the third sentence because of its lack of detail, of concrete reality. The idea of a "summer of growing up" seemed too general to her. George liked the word "summer," though, and said it was common to use a word like that to specify time. He made up a wonderful example on the spot: "He cried in the noon of his sorrow." Jack once again brought out the change of voice between the second and third sentences:

JACK: Is this another voice, "the summer of my growing up"? (Silence) All right, I think it's simply a lapsing of "sweet ironies." "Sweet ironies" is an inflated, romantic voice, and "the summer of my growing up" is simply a lapsing of that. We're getting closer to earth, down out of the clouds, it seems to me. I do think that it's coming closer to some kind of reality and to him, to some kind of true experience. Now are there any more voices between "summer of my growing up" and the beginning?

TIM: Well, I don't know if this is a voice, but one thing that struck me was "the heights and depths of emotion." I can't really tell the difference between a height of emotion and a depth of emotion. (Laughter)

ELAINE: Well, he wanted it as a literary contrast.

JOHN: But there is no contrast.

ELAINE: I know, that's why it doesn't mean anything.

JOHN: (reading in a sarcastic tone of voice) And then "there was a fullness and richness that I can see now even more clearly."

JACK: It's hard to believe "a fullness and richness" that he "sees." I think that "heights and depths of emotion" is the fourth voice, and it's a voiceless voice. It's the non-voice of a literary convention, worn-out, so it's really not a voice at all. It's perhaps closer to style than voice.

JEAN: How's that different from "joy and sorrow," "pain and pleasure"?

JACK: Because "joy and sorrow" are more concrete. "Heights and depths of emotion" is a metaphor that's worn out. As Tim says, it's a metaphor that you can never comprehend or apprehend. Joy and sorrow are concrete words; they're not exactly referring to tangible objects, but they're referring to emotions which are concrete. They're solid words; there's nothing metaphorical in joy and sorrow.... You can't forbid us joy and sorrow. The phrase is not a cliche. But I want to say something about another voice before "summer of my growing up." "Alienation" is surely the voice of the sociologist, and it's a cold word. It really creates terrific distance. But that sentence in the middle beginning with "the summer of my growing up," awkward as it is, seems to be the heart of the passage and the one valid potential in it.

This was the best discussion we've had at Gunn. I think the Gunn students have begun to grasp the idea of voice.

April 19, 1967

Today we played a prepared tape of sounds that Jack had used in our Voice Project class, and we asked the Gunn students to write their reactions to it. (The sounds were rain, footsteps, a subway, a cocktail party. We read the pieces aloud and discussed them. The first two students who read seemed to miss the real qualities of the sound-poem, for they had written relatively superficial responses to it -- one was an imitation science-fiction account of men from outer space; the other, a more interesting attempt at rendering the voices of two old women watching a peace march in the rain. Zeese tried to get at the sounds by pointing out that the sudden awareness of sounds we usually ignore is irritating.

Kathy then read her piece -- it was a series of impressions:

> Storm, noise, confusion. Raining outside. Run to mail a letter. In the city, people running, brakes are screeching, people talking. More confusion. Alone at last, free to relax, to be at peace. Time to eat -- back to the confusion of people together, talking, nervous. Back home to peace, but you can't get to sleep because the faucet is dripping at measured intervals to destroy the peace you desire --
>
> --Kathy Donohoe

Zeese talked briefly about the problems of writing in notes. He tries to show the students that it was not really a good way to recreate an impression (Kathy was trying to be impressionistic), for the lack of rhythm in these short phrases caused the prose to be dead and quite neutral, and this detracted from the effect she was aiming at. Instead of convincing us that her confusion was real and important, she simply wrote confused prose that had no rhythm, no coherence, no tension and no drive. Zeese was good at helping the class to see all this:

ZEESE: To me these short sentences are really difficult because you can read them a lot of different ways. And you are trying to read them a sort of excited way. May I see it? (Reading in a monotone) "Storm, nose, confusion, raining outside, run to mail a letter, in the city people running, brakes are screeching, people talking, more confusion."

JEAN: It's not alive. It's the way I feel sometimes when I'm aware of something and I barely register it.

ZEESE: Do you think in my reading I was trying too hard to read any emotion out of it?

STEVE: I don't know. The emotion seemed to jump out of it no matter how you read it.

ZEESE: I think because the materials are emotional. But to me, you see, what you get in here is a kind of language which is sort of like notes. You're not really getting a complete sentence. And I think that the thing really is rhythmless and this is probably why you can read it a lot of different ways, where perhaps, if you write a kind of -- if you attempt to put in all the words, to fill the thing out, you can come upon a rhythm which might control the emotions more.

STEVE: I don't see what you're getting at.

ZEESE: Look -- here's something that has a definite rhythm and I think that you can see that perhaps the effect achieved isn't exactly the one you're after but at any rate you can feel a definite emotion coming out through the rhythm of the sentence: "Back home to peace/ can't get to sleep because the faucet is dripping at regular intervals to destroy the peace you desire." Hear that at the end? "To destroy the peace you desire."

STEVE: Wow, yeah.

ZEESE: Okay. Let's just think about that without worrying about it. I think that there are good materials in here and perhaps if you try to rewrite it you can play around with writing it in a different way and see which pleases you the most.

May 10, 1967

Today we asked the students to write a short in-class composition -- "A Physical Part of Me." Jack had gotten this idea from a piece written by a

Ravenswood High School student,[*] which we planned to show them at the end of class. After about twenty minutes of writing, we read some of the results aloud. Elaine Smith read her piece about her ugly feet and Tim Crawford read about his "frisbee," a kind of plastic toy. Jack criticized this kind of writing for being "safe" -- it deals with something of minor importance to the author, so there is no real force or conviction in the writing. Next, Barbara read what she had written about her eyes:

> Burning, wondering, two orbs peering through their glassy magnifiers. Orbs that seem to know only the strain of work, of reading one word after another in endless lines down a page. Eyes. Of what use can they be? To Barry Rudd they will soon be of no use -- one of the cheap senses to be tied off in a boy scout knot, only instead of being untied, left to rot and decay into inanimate wastage.
>
> To see! To be able to turn the world topsy-turvy then set it right. To count the raindrops falling ahead of you and see a puddle and judge the distance of your tremendous jump -- right into the middle!
>
> To see: the hate and fear written across faces around you. To watch hunger bellow out children's bellies and see their innocent grins, as if unconscious of the gnawing inside.
>
> To see: to write. To place words side by side in an effort to tire out other's eyes. To make faces in the mirror and watch myself laugh at the imaged ugliness.
>
> Eyes focus on pain, joy, beauty ... Maybe the mind only sees -- maybe Barry won't lose anything.
>
> --Barbara Romanchek

Jack thought that this was a more interesting effort, but he tried to point out the shifts of voice that distracted from the real power of Barbara's piece:

JACK: Comments on this one? It's powerful, but I think it shifts voices.

TIM: Well she starts out talking about orbs and I don't know what an orb is.

ELAINE: I think I like the glasses as the magnifiers.

JACK: You did? Does anybody not like those magnifiers?

BARBARA: I couldn't think of another word. I didn't want to put just "glasses." I couldn't think of anything else. I couldn't see a thing without glasses. That's a part of me -- that's a part of my eyes -- so I have to bring them in.

JACK: Ah, that's a great idea. But I don't think you really did it.

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[*] The Ravenswood student wrote this piece in response to an experiment tried by Peggy Glenn after she had taken part in a Voice Project meeting with John Hersey (a consultant to the Voice Project), Voice Project staff and students, and other local school teachers. (See Mrs. Glenn's letter to John Hawkes in Appendix C.)

DOUG: You can't really feel it.

BARBARA: I was trying to say that my world is through my glasses.

ELAINE: Kathy just said she didn't think it was glasses. She thought it was just lenses.

DOUG: Yes, I didn't catch that at all.

JACK: But that's a marvelous idea, to try to fuse the eyeglass lens and the eye. It's certainly something to work on if you were going to expand the piece or rewrite it. Now, what about "one of the cheap senses"?

BARBARA: Well, I was just sort of getting mad at the whole world because of a book I just finished, The Child Buyers by John Hersey. One of the things they do is tie off the senses -- the mind is completely isolated.

JACK: All right, but the middle portion of your essay is satiric, right?

BARBARA: Well, I don't know.

JACK: In the middle of your essay, your response is satiric, and then you become quite serious. The "boy scout knot" is satiric.

BARBARA: Definitely.

JACK: That's a fine moment I think.

DOUG: I like that.

TIM: I didn't quite catch it. Read it over again.

BARBARA: (reading) "To Barry Rudd they will soon be of no use -- one of the cheap senses to be tied off in a boy scout knot, only instead of being untied, left to rot and decay into inanimate wastage."

JACK: Moving from being tied off in a boy scout knot to inanimate wastage is not only confused and difficult, but again, the voice change is terrific. From concrete, down-to-earth, sort of tough "boy scout knot" to this --

BARBARA: I didn't think "boy scout knot" was tough and mean.

JACK: Well, it's real. It's ordinary, commonplace, and it's shocking in terms of the sentence. It works well, I think, in terms of what you're saying, but the shift from that to the rotting business --

BARBARA: I see --

JACK: And "topsy-turvy" -- now that phrase for me would be a radical shift.

BARBARA: Well, the whole thing shifts voice.

I think we were all able to see from this discussion that the shifting voices in Barbara's essay caused the confusion we felt. Her jumping from a satiric voice to a serious one gave us no way to identify with the speaker, and it was difficult to understand what she was trying to make us feel. (This is a problem that can't be solved by looking only at the logic of her sentences.)

Jack also pointed out the dulling effect of the parallel constructions in the second half of the piece. The constant repetition of the infinitives (to see, to count, to watch, to write, to make) creates a monotonous rhythm, and this monotony bores us, makes us feel indifferent to subjects that are really serious and moving (hate and fear, the hunger of innocent children.)

At the end of the class, we passed out copies of the piece on which this exercise was based:

> These Hands of Mined. (And Its Powers).
>
> Say man, look at these hands of mined. Now tell me what you see. What you mean you don't see nothing. Now sit here and let me tell you what they have done.
>
> These hands of mined have experience many things, like good, bad, and even worst. They have gotten beat, scratch, pinch, and close up in lots of things. They are hands that lives their lives, and get me in trouble while I try and live minds. They are hands that make girls feel good and gives boys headaches. These hands of mind are made of power, without power they wouldn't be anything; because they wouldn't be able to take what they want and go where they want. These hands have broken records; and a little of everythings. These hands have work here and there; and now and then. You still don't see all of this. Well, all I have to say is that I don't know what I will do without them, but I could tell you a lot I couldn't do without them. These hands have strange powers, and one of its powers have just kept you seated until I have finish.

The Gunn students liked it, and several of them read it aloud into the tape recorder. We talked a little bit about the passages they liked: "They have gotten beat, scratch, pinch," and "They are hands that make girls feel good and gives boys headaches." We tried to make them see that these phrases are the most concrete and detailed, that here the writer lets us see something of his own experience, but I don't know how much of it got through.

SECTION 54. (MARK MIRSKY AND FRANCELIA MASON) AT TERMAN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL. LOG EXCERPTS BY FRANCELIA MASON.

December 10.

First I watched a class of exceptionally bright seventh-graders. Dolly Cosgrove had them studying the language of observation; this day she gave them a sense-observation game. One child, blindfolded (to eliminate the most familiar sense stimulus) held an unfamiliar object in his hands and described to the class as fully as possible its feel, sound, scent and taste. The unfamiliar objects had been brought in by the students. Now, "secretaries," one for each of the four senses began listing on the blackboard all the descriptive words used. After the game had shifted among many children, the teacher read the lists aloud and asked the children to pick out the most telling descriptive words. For homework they were to use as many of their senses as possible to describe specific objects at home. The children gave this classroom exercise an extremely lively response.

Between classes Dolly Cosgrove told me of the teenagers' need for experience and for appreciating values other than their own. Ideas she has used to stimulate writing and experience:

1. Record "Sounds of Sebring" played, and poem on auto racing read. Assignment: write whatever you wanted to say after hearing these.
2. Colored flickering projection on a movie screen in class, like a strobe light. Assignment: write about this sight and sensation.
3. Imagine a day in the life of a caveman.
4. A linguistic interview: Interview someone you know whose accent is different from standard. Have them pronounce certain key words; write down their exact pronunciation of these words; take note of any unusual phrases or speech mannerisms that you discover in talking to them; make up a list of these differences, and give your subject a short biographical introduction.
5. Cut out an interesting or funny picture of a person in a magazine and write a paper from the point of view of that person.

6. Assignments to evoke detail description:
   a. Describe in detail a specific store window
   b. Describe in detail something that you think is beautiful
   c. Describe in detail your favorite food.

The second class I watched that first day was an eighth-grade class termed "medium performance level." This class has dramatic potentialities: it has self-conscious adolescents, some looking nearly adult, some looking like children; some of the boys seem unconventional and lively. They were studying "teenage" and standard English: from a list they had made up for the teacher of teenage expressions from popular records, she now had them retranslate the teenage idioms back into standard English. When she had them read from a mimeographed sheet showing how a spoken conversation can exist on single-word sentences, one of the boys read his innocent part with melodramatic aggression. Others sporadically wanted to joke, or got up to scuff across the room in heavy boots.

This is the class we chose to work with.

January 10.

...By now we had learned from Dolly Cosgrove several basic things about these students. Most of them consider themselves stupid in the eyes of the junior-high academic world, and have complexes about their ability; several have school records of "getting into trouble," being kicked out of class, etc. Their papers show this block, are cramped and constrained, and far behind the students' evident ability shown in class participation. They like and respond to drama; they enjoy reading parts. They appear to be more willing to play other characters than to play themselves. Personally, I was shocked when I saw the large, snarled childish handwriting of some of these students' papers, and I was much impressed by these same students' perceptions and quick response when something kindled their interest in class.....

January 25.

Nick Selby led the class into talking about the patriotic feelings in Johnny Tremain, which had been the class' long-term reading project. He had the students compare the patriotism they felt in saying the pledge of allegiance and singing the national anthem to the feelings in the book. The discussion turned to wartime feelings, and soon the students were spiritedly exchanging their feelings on the killing in Viet Nam. (Perhaps because of their reading and writing blocks, these children tend to be apathetic on academic topics and strong on real-world topics.) At the end of the class we brought back Johnny and drama by having the Stanford people lead a spontaneous skit: Paul Buttrey was a blustering Tory teacher trying to intimidate the class, supposedly his class on the morning after the Boston Tea Party. Though we were short on time, this definitely pleased them and gave them a healthy role of defiance toward us.

February 9.

When we arrived today we were assailed by questions for which Dolly was moderator: What was this experiment stuff? Were we working with them because they were dumb? Or because we were dumb and needed training? Instead of "Voice Project," why not call it "Project Guinea Pig"? They were acutely questioning, but grinning all the time. I discussed some of the Voice Project aims (as had Dolly before) and explained that we had volunteered to come, that writers from our program were studying language with students in other schools in Palo Alto, that we chose them because they had spirit. We concluded on a joyful note when Dolly suggested they come visit a Stanford class; we and the eight-graders leaped at the idea; and plans were made for some of them to visit our class the following week. Then we took our eight students off to a separate room and went over their papers with them. We had asked that the papers have dialogue in them; now we talked with the students about whether the dialogues sounded as though real people were talking, and returned to the full class in time for a hurried two-part reading of a paper by the two-eighth-grade girls who had worked with it in conference.

From this week on, we collected the eighth-graders' papers so that the Stanford students who were working with them could comment on the papers. To me this system seems valuable in both directions: the eighth-graders benefit from the special attention to their writing, and the freshmen benefit from the critical exercise of analyzing and encouraging the work of a young, rebellious student.

February 16

I picked up five eighth-graders at Terman and brought them over to Stanford for an hour's visit while our class was in session. When we got to Stanford the freshmen were, fortunately, analyzing an Art Hoppe column, copies of which were distributed to the eighth-graders. After the freshmen tore the article apart for about half an hour, we asked the Terman students what they thought of it. Not only had they read it, but they were ready to offer their candid opinions of it. They concluded it was mediocre, but after all only meant for laughs; it reminded one student of an old war cartoon. Later Margaret McDaughey and I exclaimed over the difference between these children here and in their own classroom; both their language and their attitude became far more adult, to say nothing of their sudden willingness to offer serious analytical effort. As I drove them back to Terman, they continued discussing with enthusiasm the Hoppe article and commented on the difference between the atmosphere of the college classroom and their own and on the classroom mannerisms and even the analytical approach of the Stanford students they knew -- broadly hinting that they would like to enroll at Stanford.

February 26.

As I see it right now, the most important educational experience for both the freshmen and the eighth-graders is the involvement with each other's efforts. The seven freshmen, at least two or three of whom are considering a teaching career, have direct contact and direct responsibility in teaching specific eighth-graders --rather tricky eighth-graders, whose productivity depends upon the persuasiveness of the teacher. Thus the freshmen learn to be as convincing and evocative as possible as they comment on the younger students' papers. It's even possible that in this group effort the freshmen are subconsciously competing with each other to evoke substantial work from their students.

I intended to check with the freshmen, but I assume that this process of learning to comment constructively on papers must sharpen the freshman's critical apparatus for writing their own papers. Certainly the demands for spontaneous responsibility (for example, the sudden demand of the Terman students for Nick Selby to take over the class and his doing it on the spot) is valuable experience; it probably accounts, at least in part, for Nick's and Mark Abel's progressive effectiveness in their own class during this quarter.

This class of eighth-graders, meanwhile, likes the Stanford students' attention to them. They are getting written comments on their papers and personal conferences that few public school teachers have the time to give....

We need to experiment constantly to find writing subjects that engage these students. We have yet to explore fully that gap between the spirited stories they can sometimes tell in class and their writing. We need and plan to do more work with transcribing from tapes recorded in class story-telling sessions.

EVALUATIONS BY STANFORD FRESHMEN AND TERMAN STUDENTS

After seven weeks of working at Terman, the Stanford freshmen were asked to write a brief evaluation of the project, its successes and failures:

> The key word in our project at Terman I think should be "inspiration." The junior high school students are used to normal class techniques and are bored with them. It can readily be seen that when we fall into ordinary every day techniques, as we have on Wednesday of the past few weeks, they don't react as favorably as earlier in the quarter. The dramatics in the classroom and the individual attention with the students' work seem to be the most effective ways used thus far in firing their creative abilities. While "preteaching" is necessary, the lecture and discussion formats haven't achieved the purpose of inspiring their thought processes and their creativity in writing. Granted, there have been individual successes in certain class periods and in certain children's papers. I still feel that we could be more effective. We still have to learn what appeals to the kids and what is most beneficial for them. I also don't believe that we have helped the class develop as a whole. We need more continuity between the class session and the writing. We need to develop a progression from week to week, instead of doing something here, something there, as it comes to our minds. This is an English experiment, of course, and we can't expect a complete success. I do think that we could achieve more than we are

are presently, though, in helping these kids to develop themselves as thinkers and writers.

--Paul Buttrey

As I explained the other night, those kids, if they had their wish, would never go to that class if they didn't have to. All of them are bored, barely bother to listen. This is what we must overcome -- we have got to interest them to the degree that what the other people are saying is interesting, to the degree that they can contribute to each other.

I feel the way to do this, to develop a desire to come to that class, to make that class matter, is to let them decide on one thing they would like to discuss -- it doesn't matter what it is....

The other thing I'm worried about is discipline, which should be no problem if we develop interest which we ought to be able to (and had better be able to). Let's think of someway to channel that energy, not mentally, but physically! which will apply to the class. The problem of coping with the noise almost had me laughing, but it almost had me crying because it means it's that much harder to develop their trust, confidence, and friendship. That class was discouraging because it highlighted their boredom and our almost total lack of achievement.

Almost total -- not complete, because I think our workshop program has had effect -- Peter David's two pieces, for example -- and should be continued and expanded.... I hope we continue the workshops, because I enjoy reading the papers, trying to help. Nengin has some real talent, I feel, which should be polished -- I don't see a problem just getting her to write, as with Peter. Both of them, all of them, should be flooded with topics, but not with assignments. I think, as Peter's work proves, that care, interest, on our part in stretching their concepts of writing topics is of utmost importance. Also, it has helped me stretch my concepts of exposition (as with Peter) in making the suggestions, which I hope is evident from my comments on Peter's second paper (with the accident) which hint at development of plot.

--Nick Selby

In June, at the end of the project, the Stanford students asked the Terman eighth-grade students for their opinions on the Voice Project work done in their class:

Not enough free writing assignments.
Not enough personal attention.
Be able to write about what they want to, what they're interested in.
Down with Johnny Tremain! (and similar works)
Do more acting out of what you've read.
    Liked Paul's acting.
Have class choose what to read.
    Liked the reading of "The Doll's House."
They think we helped their writing get more detailed and expressive.
Like books with good description.
Not all the kids got to work with Stanford students.
    Those who did didn't have enough time.

--Judy Stanfield

AN EXAMPLE OF REVISION AT TERMAN.

The following are a series of revisions made by a Terman Junior High School student with the help of Stanford Freshmen Nick Selby and Margaret McDaughey, who wrote comments on his papers and helped him with in-class revision:

1) The paper as first handed in by Peter David

The Car

It was the 6th day of the month of February. We walked into the showroom of Lenard Ely Chysler Plimouth & Valiant. It was a large showroom, we had 11 children in the famialy. My father a tall man and my mother was 5 5. A dark haired man walked up to my dad and said, "May I help you." Then my father said, "Yes I'd like to buy a station wagon."

The sailsman usered us out to the lot. There was a Trurben bronze Town & Country. The coast "3,060,000.

My father asked If we could take it our for a ride. He handed us the keys.

2) Comments by Nick Selby to Peter David handed back with the paper.

Questions and Suggestions

1) Why do a "large showroom" and "we had 11 children" go in the same sentence? Were you all still crowded?
2) Could you make the description of your father and mother longer? Could you write a description of the 11 kids as they looked roaming around the showroom?
3) The detail of dark hair on the salesman is good. What else did you notij e about him? Did he wear a suit? How well did he dress in comparison to your father? Does he smoke a cigar? Does he wear glasses?
4) The verb "ushered" is a good one. What was the car lot like? Were there a lot of cars? Were they old or mostly new?
5) How many cars did you look at before finding the model you mention? Was it a new car? How big was the engine? Could you write a paragraph simply describing the car?
6) What did you think of the car? Did you tell your father that you thought the family needed a Mustang or an Impala? Would you have argued with him over his choice of the car? Maybe you could write a dialogue in which you do disagree and are trying to convince your father to get another car.
7) What happened during the ride? In other words, what is the climax you are building up to? Does the car turn out to be a "lemon"? Have you ever had a frightening car ride? Have you ever been in or seen an accident? What were your feelings? Were you scared or sickened? Perhaps you could write about this, or about a talk you had with another observer, or with someone who was in the accident.

Your paper suggests many excellent opportunities for future writing, or future tape recordings. If you amplified any area mentioned above or one suggested, you could have a fine paper.

Nick

3) In-class revision with Margaret McDaughey.

We walked to the car and got in. It was sort of crowded in the wagon.

We drove out of the driveway onto El Camino we turned left onto the Freeway. My father darted out onto the freeway and, HIT ANOTHER CAR.

"Why you idiate," my mother shouted and then my father said.

"Oh shut up, you fool."

"Talk about fools, how wanted to try the car out anyway."

"Well how are we going to pay for this car?"

Meanwhile, the police were asking questions and getting no answers. The car was totaled but we were unhurt.

When we got back to Lenard Ely we talked the salesman and the manager. They said that the insurence would pay for some damage, but it was my fathers fault. But it turned out that my father had to buy the car. The man in the other car ened up with a stiff neck, his ear was dented on the side but not much.

4) As finally revised after Nick's and Margaret's work with him.

"The Car"

It was the sixth day of February. We walked into the showroom of Leonard Ely Chysler Plymouth & Valiant. It was a large showroom, we had 11 children in the family. My father a tall not so slim and a tall man walked up to us and said.

"May I help you?"

"Yes, we're looking for a roomy wagon."

"Yes, I think we have just the thing. Just step this way."

He ushered use to the door and then on to the lot, were a new 67 Town & Country wagon.

"Do you think we could try the car out?"

"All right."

The man handed my father the keys and we left the lot, onto El Camino; then my father decided to try it on the freeway. It was really crowded in the car even if it was a nine passenger, there were child's sitting on mom's lap, and then others were all spralded out on the third seat. Then all of a sudden we darted out onto the freeway; then like a madman my father slamed on the brakes; and (crash) we hit another car on the side of the door. The kid's were cry "I wana go home, or else just blubering."

"Why you idiote, how are you going to pay for this car?" screamed my mother.

"Oh, shut up, you fool."

"Talk about fools, how wanted to take a test drive."

Meanwhile the police came, they were asking questions but getting no answers. We got out of the car and went to talk to the other man how was in the car we hit. Lukily he wasn't hurt.

It was a real mess, the freeway was blocked up for a mile or so, the kid's were running around in circles the police were putting flares around the two cars.

Then the police touch two or three cars and drove us back to Lenard Ely.

My mother and father were talking to the saleman and the manager. It ended up that "because it was my dad's fault" we were going to have to pay for the car.

THE END..

IV. SUMMER PROGRAM

THE BLACK VOICE: TEACHING AT THE COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO

BY THOMAS GRISSOM

> I'm far from it, 'cause I've known days when there was no food in the house, and I was starving, and I didn't have anything to wear to school. I know what it's like to be hungry, dear boy.
>
> --Frances Earle, July 26, 1967
> (Student in Summer Readiness Program,
> College of San Mateo)

"What's the tape recorder for?"

Gwen was the first in our class of eleven black students to speak. Kim and Mark -- two Stanford freshmen who had been in the Voice Project classes of John Hawkes and Mark Mirsky, respectively -- and I groped through the use of tapes. We hoped that they would warm to the novelty of a tape recorder on that first day and use it for telling a chain story. We could then play it back for them and convert the tape into a transcript so that it could be read.

But we were taken back when they unanimously agreed that they wrote better than they spoke. The opposite was true for most of the white students I had taught. I now believe they were really saying, "As a teacher, you will probably prefer my writing to my speaking." They were unconsciously emphasizing the disparities between their habits of speech, which are "taught out" by our society's schools, and their style of writing, which is a reflection of the mainstream American usage. The students had been made to feel guilty about the way they spoke.

"Well man, I really need your English class."

Lee Cohens, an outspoken affable boy of eighteen who worked nights as a janitor at the Ampex plant, had just read a three-page transcript of the story he had told the class on the first day. The story was about an imaginary trip he had taken to Rome during the weekend following his graduation from high school. His telling of the tale had dominated our entire class, but after reading what he had said, he was disappointed and ashamed.

"He couldn't tell me why he felt that way. The other kids helped him out. "It's not 'proper'." "There are too many mistakes in there." Lee finally burst out, "This is pool hall talk." Of course it was. The language was imprecise and full of Negro jargon. It was more oral than written and appeared flat and dull when there wasn't instant human feedback or physical contact for the non-verbal aspects of communication. But it *sounded* beautiful! There were rhythms and inflections in that speech that I had never heard before.

We wanted to prove this to Lee. The night before this class we had prepared a tape of a white student from Stanford reading Lee's transcript without ever hearing him tell the story.

After discussing the story during the class we turned the recorder on, and Lee heard the white girl trying to tell his story. He was amazed to hear her voice change speeds and slip back and forth from conventional speech into a weak imitation of the Negro dialect and accent. Near the end of the transcript there are the two sentences: "Seem like they celebrate *anything*. Yeah, but I was really happy from celebratin!, celebrating graduation, you know, but they was doin' it." The girl read the underlined words the same way she had always read underlined words on a printed page. She gave them emphasis by reading louder.

After pointing this out to Lee we turned his tape on and listened to these original passages. He hadn't raised his voice at all. His voice had dropped in pitch. He had given the words an enchanting rhythm and said them with an added intensity. It was emphasis in his way. With a typewriter, the secretary could only underline it, and with a printed page, the student could only raise her voice.

I also showed him where he had said, "It was real nice, and you know they was more like relatives to strangers, you know, you'd walk past them and they'd have somethin' to say, you know, they --- you'd smile and that was *it*. Yeah, it was real nice." We listened to him saying it over the tape recorder. His voice was marvelous, full of warmth and tenderness. On the transcript, however, the sentences appeared plain and confused. He was trying to say that these people treated him like a relative. They treated strangers as if they were relatives. His spoken voice conveyed this feeling, this impression. But when put to paper it was lost. I think this moment marked the start of a change in attitude by these black students toward their speech. Perhaps I should have urged the transformation of these spoken strengths into their writing, but I felt it was more important for the students to see the value in something they already possessed -- their own speaking voices.

"Don't get all excited about the way I talk 'cause I know where it leads to. I want some of the stuff you're puttin' down."

A week later Lee confronted me with a problem that all of us from Stanford had been ignoring or afraid to consider. Through our sincere enthusiasm for their class participation and early writing, some of the black students thought we were romanticizing their spontaneity of thought and speech. This is how a well-intentioned white teacher patronizes a black student. "Just be yourself when you write." "If you come to class, you'll get no lower than a C." "It's more important what you say, than how you say it." They had been told this before and the result had been poor grades, remedial courses, crippled reading skills, and a detached, breezy attitude toward writing.

Lee wanted "what I was puttin' down" because it would lead to that fat check, baby." His motives were clear and precise. He felt no need to hide them behind some doubletalk about the joy of learning. And he wanted to make sure I knew all of this. "Don't tell me grammar and spelling ain't important. That's how you get a job."

I admired his honesty although it was upsetting for us from Stanford. He was telling too much of the truth about all of us. Our first reaction was to do what Lee wanted us to do -- a much easier teaching task. We could eliminate the mechanical errors in the class' writing and take satisfaction in the belief that their writing had, indeed, improved. This illusion was shattered within a few days, shortly after we had spent an entire class "correcting" sentences.

"Tom, you really got to me! You said, 'Hell' Who would write somethin' like this!' -- and I wrote it! I was mad at you that day -- I coulda cut your neck off."

Bonnie and I were disappointed in each other. She had turned in a nice, clean, relatively flawless piece of garbage and I was angry at her dishonesty. She had written the "proper" way, the grammatical way, and had all the opinions that she thought a teacher would expect to find within the "right kind" or writing:

> To me the 4th of July is suppose to be a day that all Americans give thanks for their independence. Because on this Great Day the Declaration

> of Independence was signed making all Americans independent. This day should be a day of flag flying. Or a big parade with people standing on the side line cheering and waving flags, showing that they really appreciate this great day....
>
> --Bonnie

In my anger, I was revolting against the very practice I had been encouraging. Bonnie and the class had proved to me and themselves that preoccupation with grammar and spelling would only lead to improved grammar and spelling. And the emphasis on these problems led them away from honesty, sincerity, and feeling. It encouraged students to make a number of assumptions about their teachers' expectations, the "right" way to write, separation of the classroom from the experiences of life, and the necessity of keeping certain "things" out of your writing.

The class had been asked to write about the Fourth of July. The papers were, in fact, relatively free of usage errors, but the content was characterized by lifeless language and stereotyped opinion. They read like small town Kansas newspapers and elementary school civics textbooks. The expression of beliefs, which we knew were not their own, with words taken from English class spelling lists, and placed in sentences which could be diagrammed for structure with three parallel lines, was more than we could take:

> I feel that the Fourth of July is a day when everyone can have fun and express their feelings.
>
> --Cubie

> The Fourth of July is a day when each person in the U.S. relaxes, goes on a picnic, watches fireworks, or visits friends.
>
> --Lynne

Though we could have spent a great deal of time criticizing these papers, we chose to emphasize what was most obvious to us all. The passion of their beliefs and the excitement of their language which we had come to know in class was absent in this writing. That we could recognize this was not only a criticism of their writing but a revelation about themselves -- they had distinctive voices that people could hear. And, lastly, we could share the blame because we had emphasized form and structure to them before and while they were writing.

A few hours after class I reminded Lee of his earlier statement about grammar and spelling. He replied, "I wanna get that job, but not so bad that I wanna lose my voice."

"Now you go back to the middle of that thing you wrote and you'll see you sound like you're tryin' to be cool. But in the end it sound completely serious."

Skip wrote only a few times during the summer. But he was the best teacher in the class. He was a careful listener and observer who put his abilities to work criticizing the other students' written work. He used his knowledge of the class and his sensitive ears to identify anonymous student writers and to differentiate between writing done by girls and boys.

Skip was verbal, and he was in a class which demanded that he tell stories, make up accents and rhythms, imitate the sounds of old age and youth, and identify and criticize written passages imitating speech. More than any other student, he grasped the focus of each class meeting and would guide the discussion with his own questioning and critical remarks.

Skip never let anyone know much about himself. It was easier for him to act, imitate, and criticize than to reveal. As we moved through the summer, however, this detachment began to fade. The kids would challenge him on his ideas about writing and his personal beliefs. "I just don't talk that way, Skip." "I wasn't brought up to believe that." "You never write anything, Skip, who are you to say?" He had to reply and defend himself. He had to be a teacher instead of the teacher.

Slowly, a new Skip emerged, on paper and on tape. "The forth of July is for the wight man." "I believe it's a dog eat dog world." "My daddy never taught me nothin'. I learned how to play basketball and baseball myself with a lotta time and embarrassment." He was the only student who always used the word "black" instead of "Negro."

A person left closed up and tight by a society and its schools, a boy whose obvious abilities had been crippled and blunted -- though he never totally accepted us, the Voice Project was a release for what was his and may be most important to his life: his knowledge about sounds and language left to him by a society which forced him to listen more often than speak. He drew upon what he knew about speech to criticize other students' writing and to dramatize other authors' characters. As he heard tapes of himself and read transcripts of his remarks, he was no longer ashamed. During the last week, when he read the students' writing on the Detroit and Newark riots, he was impressed by what they had done. And his last in-class remarks gave some hint as to when and why Skip will begin to write.

Discussing Eric's paper on the riots:

SKIP: I didn't imagine nobody in this class would write like that.

GWEN: Eric usually didn't like to write.

SKIP: This was on a subject he wanted to write about.

ERIC: I'll write when I have somethin' to write.

SKIP: Tell 'em, brother. A whole different way of lookin' at things.

ERIC: When you read what Johnson say --- Well, I disagree with 'im so I just start to writin'.

SKIP: You sits up and writes and can't stop.

ERIC: And then it just kept comin', I just kept writin'.

"That writing's so bad Valerie's done asleep."

That was Gwen's way of criticizing the following passage.

> The upsurge probably reflects as well the realization of increasing number of the world's youth that world peace probably can be accomplished twenty years faster by a deliberate design-science revolution than by waiting for the inadevertent twenty-years-later-fallout into the standard-of-living-advancing-commerce of the accelerating ephemeralization, as originally promulgated by only a wide variety of basic fear motivations, all of which result in the self-protective world-munitions racing. The world youth intuit that the twenty-year difference could be the difference between humanity's success or extinction.

We had chosen a passage from Buckminster Fuller's personal essay in the reunion book for his graduating class at Harvard College to demonstrate the importance of authorial purpose and reading audience in certain kinds of writing. Together we staggered through a reading and then patiently defined all the words which the class didn't know. After reading the passage once again, the class began to understand what was being said. Skip suggested rather blandly. "This man is against the draft."

But Gwen saw even more. Half the class was asleep or studying psychology. "Why is everybody so bored, Gwen"? "Because this man writes to put you asleep." She had seen the negative effect of writing which is meaningless to specific audiences.

We woke everyone up and in a few minutes had them all eagerly discussing the importance of considering the writer's purpose and his audience, how scientists and "people who go to Harvard" talk and write, and how choice of words can affect the ease of reading and understanding. If language could put certain people to sleep, it could also be used to attract their attention, persude them, and change their opinions.

"It could be a girl saying that or a boy. So I'm not voting."

Jackie didn't say a word until the fourth day of our class. He wouldn't come the first day. The second day he slouched in a chair where he hid behind a pair of blue sunglasses and listened. The third day he faked reading a book for psychology. On the fourth day he wouldn't sit at the table. He sat in a chair along the wall, still wearing the "shades," but following the class discussion.

The students had done in-class writing on the two previous days but Jackie had refused to write. Now they were discussing a dittoed sheet on which each student's writing appeared, anonymously, and in parallel columns for each day. On both days they had been asked to react and respond to two different tapes of sounds of war, rainfall, truck sirens, and pedestrians. Tuesday's papers had been dull listings of the various sounds with a few attempts to tie the sounds together in a story. The first writing we received from the class, -- it was monotonous, dry, unimaginative, and barely readable.

On Wednesday, without returning any papers, we talked about the words "reaction," "response," and "imagination." We differentiated between descriptions which merely identify and descriptions which are the controlled release of imagination in response to a stimulus. Wednesday's writing was so startlingly different that we decided to contrast the two assignments for each student on the same dittoed page.

Tuesday	Wednesday
The noises that I've heard seem to pertain to the military; all the strange noises had to do with the military, the target practice, and I guess that rumbling noise were tanks, and also the men doing exercises and the siren maybe that was an alert signal for the men to go into action, for instance we have practice fire drills, maybe that siren was for them to practice, in case of an attack.	It reminds me of rain falling on cement and when I have to go out in the cold to get the Sunday paper or when I'm stuck on the sidewalk and there isn't anyone around, waiting for my dad whose about 10 minutes late -- It reminds me of San Francisco -- all the fog and the noise of traffic busily buzzing along -- and it also reminds me of a day at CSM.

(Both pieces of writing are by the same student on successive days.)

After a short discussion about which papers they preferred and why, we asked if they could decide upon the sex of the writer whose work appeared on the list. Jackie's sunglasses came down off his nose. He looked at me for the first time. The students had begun to argue among themselves. "What do you mean, 'no woman would say that'?" "Well, it sounds like a boy here (Wednesday) but not in this one (Tuesday)." After fifteen minutes on the first two papers we took a vote on the writer's sex. Jackie refused to vote. The vote was 5-4 and the majority was right. It was a girl.

We went on to the next two examples. Jackie put his sunglasses in his pocket, stood up, and swaggered down to a vacant chair at the end of the table. He smiled with feigned confidence and remained silent. The second discussion was even more furious. The class began to concentrate on the second day's writing more and more to determine the author's sex. "You can't tell nothin' from the first column." "There's people in the last writing." The vote was 6-3 for a girl. This time the majority was wrong. Jackie still didn't vote.

Now Jackie began to look at the dittoed page. "Who wrote #3?" Again the discussion focused on the second column.

At first it reminded me of the War in Vietnam. A sergeant in the background giving orders to his men to fire. I mean the sound of guns firing made me think of the war... People riding around in the Africa jungle and I could hear elephants in the background. Maybe on a safari in jeeps... A soldier giving orders to other soldiers about handling rifles and marches back and forth. I could hear the stamping of feet very loudly.... A buzzer was ringing very loudly. It sounded like a warning or something.

I'm sitting in my front room, looking out at the cars going along in the rain. People are walking to and fro trying to get home and out of the rain. My house is near an airport and I can can hear a plane coming in for a landing. I imagine the runway lights must be blaring along the runway. I have a warm sense of security, me and my house and the rain outside. The rain can't get in, and I don't want to go out. The passengers are leaving the plane to go home. Relatives are waiting happily to see them.

They began to point out that because on Wednesday we had urged personal and imaginative responses, it was easier to detect the writer behind these descriptions than the rigid descriptions that were written on Tuesday. Finally, Jackie spoke. In the end he did vote -- on the winning side of a 7-3 decision that it was a girl writing.

"I felt very inadequate as a teacher. I realize now that teaching is similar to acting -- the role requires a constant, high energy level. Once caught up by the role, I empathized -- and tired easily."

--Kim Dunster, Stanford student

"I wasn't gonna write nothin' for that class. But Kim convinced me I should write."

--Bonnie

Kim and Mark and the five other Stanford students who taught this summer never felt completely at ease. They didn't really think that we would ask them to be responsible for an entire class. During the school year, as students in the Voice Project, they were able to remain fairly passive. Teaching one or two days a week in the local schools was fun. There were ideas from their own Voice Project classes which they could use and enough time for preparation. The abundance of time and fresh ideas was now gone. And so was the room full of white, middle-class students.

They were bruised by student criticism. "Kim, you're sweet and well-meaning." "Mark acts like a king on a pin cushion." And yet they never gave up. At times Mark became negative and Kim would become silent, but we all believed that any failure in a class session was our fault. If Jackie was asleep, our boredom had put him there. If David was at school and yet refused to come to class, it was our inability to attract and hold his enthusiasm that was to blame. If Lynn refused to write and sulked around the class, it was because, as she said to me, "You don' wanna know me."

In the classroom the Stanford freshmen often lacked patience and the tolerance for silence which is particularly necessary when teaching students who have learned not to like school or teachers. At times they couldn't accept the clatter and confusion that comes with eleven students who have just discovered something worth writing and talking about. We had to have three teachers in that room just to keep up with all the side conversations, the shouted questions, and the softly murmured discoveries. The hundreds of hours they shared with the College of San Mateo students surely accounts for part of the immense growth in self-confidence and individual pride and the increasing willingness to write, which I witnessed in these black students. I believe in the end we were all colleagues.

At the end of the summer, Kim wrote to me:

> "'I have to write something about this summer.'
>
> "'What are you goin' to write about?' He cooed it, laughing softly. 'Write about how a nice white Stanford girl like you spent a nice, interesting summer teaching some poor ghetto Negroes how to write English.'
>
> "'Lee, come on, not like that. That's unfair.'
>
> "'Yeah, I know. I understand.'
>
> "It wasn't like that, Lee. I do not intend to reduce -- or glorify -- this past summer's work to that. I learned as much as you did, maybe more. And I walked in blind."

Without "reducing or glorifying" the summer, I too can say with certainty that it was always difficult. Our successes were never continuous or consistent.

Student interest and participation was always fluctuating. The zeal and imagination of the teachers (freshmen and graduate students alike) was not always equal to the task of teaching. But what follows is an account of four successive classes held during the fifth week, a week in which we all learned together.*

"Games are fun. Now make up one that can teach somebody something."

At the end of the fourth week of our summer program Kim, Mark and I were beginning to despair. We were unable to maintain the occasional high points of a class discussion from one day to another. And it seemed that we were running out of new ideas for teaching. Probably more than anything else, we were scared. We were out of ideas because there were no more ideas to be borrowed from other teachers who had used them in other situations. We had to create something for that class, for us, and for those students.

Over one weekend I worked on setting up a word or language game for Monday's class. "Games are fun. Now make up one that can teach somebody something," I said to myself on Saturday morning. On Sunday evening when Mark and Kim came over to plan for class I was prepared. "If I gave you a list of characters and personalities and a set of quotations, could you match them up? Would it catch your attention even for a few minutes?" They were dubious, at best, about me and the game. "Games are phony. What happens after they get the right answer?" "What are we really trying to accomplish?" "This just keeps them away from the hard work of writing and that's why they'll like it." My reply was vague. "Well, we could make them tell us why they thought it was one person as opposed to another. Then they could read the quotes and maybe talk in the accent or dialect of the character. And maybe we could ask them to write a few more lines in that same person's voice." So we agreed to try it.

And within ten minutes, we were sprawled all over the floor in my living room rummaging through plays, novels, and short stories looking for voices. "Ahh, listen to this." "Does this sound like a college professor to you?" "God, they'll never get this one." By class time we had a list of fifteen characters and eleven quotations. We divided the class into three groups of four and each of us took a group, a tape recorder, and our game, off to a separate corner of the campus.

I passed out the lists and we spent a few minutes reading over the quotations, and a couple of students began guessing out loud who the speakers were.

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*Dialogue appears exactly as it occurred. Words which seem to be omitted or misspelled are not transcription or typographical errors.

76 year old rural widow
U.S. fighter pilot
Southern minister
Businessman
Treasurer of the American Dental Association
High School Principal
Ronald Reagan
7 year old girl
White son of a southern U.S. Senator
New York taxi driver
LBJ
Chairman of small college English Department
Unemployed, 21 year old Negro
42 year old suburban housewife

1) So when I draw the Lord He'll be a real big man. He has to be to explain about the way things are.

2) Your education has been planned and geared to arm and prepare you to function as mature and thinking citizens capable of shouldering the burdens and responsibilities which a thriving democracy imposes.

3) Doorstep's dirty, why don't you take the chair there? I'd go look for him but I just got over my sciatica, and the fields are more than is ripe for me just now.

4) We takes the Bible at its word, and goes off on our own kind of original praying.

TOM: Who is talking in #1?

(Long silence)

TOM: Look at the words. Do they give you any clues?

(Long Silence)

TOM: Who draws? Do any of you draw? Who would be talking about drawing?

(Long silence)

TOM: What's the Lord look like, Frances?

FRANCES: I don't know. I don't think you can see him.

TOM: Did you ever think he could be seen? I mean, did you used to?

FRANCES: When I went to Sunday school I had books with his picture in them.

DAVID: Aw, yeah, man. He had long hair and a robe and a beard.

TOM: Do you believe that now, David?

DAVID: Hell no, man.

TOM: All right then, what's that tell you about who might be talking here?

All during the discussion here there was a feverish attempt to match up the quote with a speaker. People were whispering to each other, laughing at their guesses, yelling out their matches, and ridiculing the other members of the class. I let them go until Bonnie shouted out, "It's the seven year old girl."

TOM: Why do you think so, Bonnie?

GWEN: 'Cause kids draw, 'specially in Sunday school, and they always think the Lord is big.

(Loud approval from class, shouting and giggling)

SKIP: A seven year old girl wouldn't use the word 'explain."

TOM: Why not, Skip?

SKIP: It's too big. It sounds like you talkin'.

TOM: How would a seven year old say it then?

SKIP: He has to be to -- He has to -- He has to be to -- That sounds like a kid there. But. He has to be to say way things are. He has to be to say the way things are.

FRANCES: Or, "he's gotta be to explain the way things are."

TOM: Does anyone want to guess what the girl would say next?

(No one wanted to)

SKIP: "Cause things sure are messed up." That's what I think she'd say.

After a short pause one of those things happened which seemed to take place all of the time this summer. Someone said, "Let's go to #2," and everyone started shouting "Yeah Yeah" as if they had the sure answer to #2. And they did. Everyone knew that that person speaking was a high school principal.

TOM: All right, then, let's all read it the way we think it is spoken by this guy.

(No one was eager to read, but I ignored them and said that I was going to read also, "so let's go."

Everyone read in a monotone as if the words were coming across a viewfinder. I tried to give it feeling. We recorded each reading and then played them back all together.

TOM: Which did you think sounded most like the principal?

TOM: Why?

SKIP: Cause it sounded like I wanted it to sound.

DAVID: No, Skip, you're wrong.

SKIP: Look, I know how I wanted it to sound.

TOM: Have you ever had a principal talk to you like that?

SKIP: Yep, Mr. ______ talks like that.

DAVID: No he don't. He talks real sof'.

SKIP: I can't help it.

FRANCES: But you gotta help it. You can't make him sound like you if you aren't him.

TOM: I thought mine was the best reading.

DAVID: Yeah, man, me too. That's what I thought.

TOM: Why?

David: Cause your voice moved up and down.

Frances: You gave it emphasis.

BONNIE: You sounded like you'd been around a tape recorder all your life.

TOM: You mean you would sound different if there were no tape recorder?

BONNIE: No. (Silence) You just sound cultured.

We then went to #3 and Frances immediately said it was a 76-year-old rural widow.

TOM: Why, Frances?

SKIP: That don't make no sense to me. ..."why don't you take the chair?"

FRANCES: Well, the words "fields" and "ripe" make me think it is in the country. So it's rural.

TOM: Is that what gave you the key to it? Does the person speaking in #3 sound like a woman? A country woman?

SKIP: Sounds like a crazy woman.

TOM: Read it like an old woman, Frances.

FRANCES: I don't know how to read like an ol' woman.

TOM: Be old.

FRANCES: I don't know how to read like an ol' woman.

TOM: Be old.

FRANCES: Uhhh... (She then read it, but was interrupted in the second sentence.)

DAVID: Naw, Frances.

FRANCES: I don't know how to read like an old woman.

(Skip then read the first sentence and said he was confused.)

SKIP: What's that mean? That's why I think she's crazy.

TOM: Okay. That sentence doesn't make perfect sense to you. You've noticed that. What would you want to say there? Add some words if you want to. Just make it clearer.

SKIP: The doorstep is dirty so why don't you take that chair over there.

(The underlined words are his additions.)

TOM: But this person is not talking that way.

DAVID: (Imitating) "Doorstep's dirty, why don't you take the chair over there."

FRANCES: You put a word in, David.

SKIP: Maybe an old lady would say it like this -- or she would leave out words.

FRANCES: Maybe she'll forget about it. Cause she's old.

TOM: Well, read it, Frances, the way you think it sounds. I bet you can make it sound natural for an old woman.

FRANCES: Aw no! I can't read like a old woman.

TOM: Can you make any sense out of that phrase "and the fields are more than is ripe for me just now"?

SKIP: Means they are harvesting or it's too hot out there now.

FRANCES: I know what she means but maybe she says it that way because she is from the country.

TOM: How do people in the country talk?

DAVID: (Imitating) "You go on off over there." "Hey boy."

TOM: Is there a difference between city and country people?

FRANCES: They say, "You all," and "Hey there."

TOM: I say "You all."

SKIP: They say "go out doors" instead of "outside".

DAVID: It don't sound right to me, man. I got to add a word to make it right.

TOM: Let me try reading it. (I read it.)

FRANCES: You sound like a old lady, too.

TOM: Okay. Its starting to make sense isn't it? Its almost natural. But there are things about it which seem wrong or strange to us. Like the way Skip said it is probably the way I would say it. But that isn't the way this writer has this person speaking. If I ask you to write like a 76 year old women, do you think you would be able to write something like the way this person sounds? Can you give a person a voice when you write that makes them sound like they really are? Or would you make a 76 year old women sound more like yourselves?

BONNIE: I could do it.

TOM: Who would be the easiest person for you to give voice to?

BONNIE: I don' know. I never thought about that. I don' know.

DAVID: Not really. (giggling)

TOM: Can you imitate a coach?

DAVID: No.

TOM: Then you tell me how your basketball coach speaks. Tell me what is different about the way you speak in regard to the way he speaks.

DAVID: I speak soft and he yells a lot.

TOM: Does he yell a lot?

DAVID: Yeah. (Then in a soft restrained voice.) "Goddam your ass. Let's get it."

TOM: Great! Go on. I want to hear more from him and less from you.

DAVID: (His voice increasing in pitch) "You're tired, hunh, get off your and fix it.

SKIP: Yeah, he says "You guys" and "Git" a lot. He has an accent but ah---it's not an accent only---I don't know how to say it. From the words a colored person would use and a white person would use. They might be the same but they sound different.

TOM: Can you put a sound in writing?

BONNIE: Yeah. If they was country you could put "ain't" and stuff like that in there.

SKIP: I don't mean a country accent.

TOM: How about spelling? That can make different sounds. Take the "get". I want to get a car today. How do you spell "Get"?

BONNIE: G-e-t

TOM: Now you want to make that sound like a country boy and you say, Ah'm goin' to git me a new cah today. How would you spell get?

FRANCES: G-i-t

TOM: Right. And when you read it you couldn't mistake it for g-e-t.

BONNIE: But you'd try to read it as 'get' ... if you were reading it as a book.

TOM: Don't you let yourself hear the voices when you read, Bonnie? For instance if you were from the country would you say, "I am not going to git me a car today"?

FRANCES: No, you'd say, "I ain't."

DAVID: Or "I isn't."

TOM: What is the difference between "I am" and "I is"?

SKIP: The words are different but there is no difference in meaning.

TOM: There's no difference in meaning?!

SKIP: They's both going to get the car.

TOM: Who is "they"? Are "They" the same?

SKIP: No--- they mean the same thing. But they said it with different words. And we know that one of 'em doesn't speak right.

We then went on to #11.

TOM: Who is speaking in #11?

SKIP: "He takes the Bible... (reading)

BONNIE: A Southern Negro minister.

TOM: Why do you think that is so, Bonnie?

BONNIE: 'Cause he sounds Southern.

TOM: What in there sounds Southern?

SKIP: "Goes"

TOM: What's wrong with that?

SKIP: It should be just plain "go".

TOM: Should be?

SKIP: That's the way I'd say it. (He then reads the sentence the way he prefers it. But in the reading he also leaves off the "s" in 'takes'.)

TOM: Okay Skip, read that first phrase again.

SKIP: (Reading) We take the Bible ...

TOM: What did you just do? Read it again.

SKIP: We take the Bible...

TOM: You aren't reading it the way it's written.

SKIP: Well, that's the way I say it.

DAVID: That ain't the way it's written, bub.

TOM: Why can't you read it the way it's written, Skip?

SKIP: I don't talk that way. That's the way this man talks. Not me.

TOM: What about the phrase, "our own kind of original praying"? Can you make that sound more like a Northern minister or church?

FRANCES: (After long silence) "Personal kind of prayer".

DAVID: Or "unique form of praying".

TOM: The word "praying" sounds too country to me. I see that minister up there shouting and screaming and telling everyone to begin praying and by gawd they sure enough commence. Can you see that? (Laughter is out of control. Skip is up walking around the table and telling David he's never seen anyone so gassed over words before.) And in that nice quiet city church in New York, the minister raises his hands, invokes the Lord's benevolence, and speaks out the Lord's Prayer by himself. Skippy, read that the way a Southern minister or preacher would say it.

He reads the sentence and then we listen to it on the tape recorder. Bonnie reads it and we listen to her.

TOM: Bonnie, did you act it out?

SKIP: She didn't even read it the way it was on there.

BONNIE: I did too.

SKIP: You said, "We take the Bible..."

BONNIE: Oh-- "We takes the Bible"-- I just can't say that--- Sorry.

TOM: Of course-- That's all I want you to see. It's hard for me to say it that way, too.

DAVID: Yeah, it is man.

TOM: In writing you might have to write about other people, and other places, and other things. So how do you do it? Well, one of the ways is to start getting in their bag. Oops, that's just what I did. "Bag" is your word, see, not mine. Why don't you read it, Frances.

FRANCES: "We takes the Bible at its own word-- "

TOM: Its what kind of word?

FRANCES: "At its own word"-- oh, "at its word"

TOM: Why do you keep adding words?

FRANCES: Cause it doesn't sound right.

TOM: For you it doesn't. But how about a Southern minister?

FRANCES: Oh, it's perfect for him.

TOM: Well, you have just heard a voice that is not your own. A voice so different from yours that you have trouble duplicating it.

David asked to read it again. He has tremendous difficulty reading and so I went through the sentence with him one word at a time. Then he read it without much halting and stammering. We listened to a recording of his reading and when it was over he let out a hugh sigh and asked to read it with feeling now that he had gotten the words down. The next recording was so good the other kids in the class clapped for him.

After class David asked if we could do this "same sort of stuff" tomorrow. He suggested that he could run the tape recorder which would free me so I "could do more teaching and acting." That evening, however, David was arrested for some offense and didn't get back to our class with any regularity or enthusiasm for the rest of the summer.

For our next meeting we prepared another list of quotations and possible speakers. Our hope for this class was to have the students write additional passages in the voice of the speaker once they had identified him and duplicated the sound of his speech. To make this more likely we chose longer quotations.

TOM: Does anyone know if David is here today?

BONNIE: He's in court this morning.

TOM: Will he be coming to class?

BONNIE: I don't think so.

TOM: Well ... Uh. I've drawn up another list for you this morning and it's a little more difficult than yesterday's. The speeches are a little longer and they may be harder to identify--but you'll know more about the speaker this way and you should even be able to write in his voice by the time we are finished. So let's take a look at #1.

> **They was all drunk, and when they seen your father's brother they let out a great whoop and holler and they aimed the car straight at him, the way they do sometimes, you know. But they was drunk. And I guess the boy, being drunk, too, and scared, kind of lost his head. By the time he jumped it was too late. And, time your father got down the hill, his brother weren't nothing but blood and pulp.**

After a few minutes we all read the passage aloud so that everyone could understand the words.

TOM: Who is speaking here?

SKIP: Sounds like a good old boy. [A Southern redneck]

TOM: Why do you say that, Skip?

SKIP: Well, 'cause they was all drunk and whoopin' and hollerin'. And they left that man in bloody. Sounds like that's what a good old boy would do.

TOM: Do you all agree with Skip?

FRANCES: I don't know... what he said I agree with, but that "your father" bit doesn't fit.

TOM: Huh?

FRANCES: I mean it sounds like someone is talking or telling a story to someone else. And it wouldn't be a good old boy telling it, would it?

BONNIE: I think it's a story about good old boys. But this person isn't one of them.

TOM: Now some of you have said it is a story. Is that what it is or is it a speech to an audience or just a person thinking to himself?

FRANCES: No, it's got to be a story...from one person to another.

TOM: What makes you think so, Frances?

FRANCES: It just sounds like a conversation to me.

(Long silence)

TOM: Is that a man or woman speaking?

FRANCES: I think it is a woman. ....see the way she says "the boy, being drunk, too, and scared,..." -- it's like she feels sorry for him or doesn't want to blame him.

SKIP: Naw, naw. No woman would say "blood and pulp."

TOM: What do you mean?

SKIP: It just doesn't sound right for a girl to say it that way. She would say something like, "and his brother was dead."

BONNIE: Well I think it's a woman.

TOM: Well there are only two women on the list. Which one is it?

BONNIE: The elderly Negro mother.

TOM: Why couldn't it be the social worker? Couldn't she be telling a family about the death of a relative?

FRANCES: I don't think so. My social worker doesn't talk that way. She uses such big words I just look into her mouth and leave the house.

BONNIE: Yeah, that's right.

TOM: Okay, tell me how she sounds like an elderly Negro mother. What clues do you get in this passage?

SKIP: Her talk isn't right. Down there where she says, "his brother weren't nothing...". It sounds wrong.

TOM: How should it be?

SKIP: Ummm... his brother were-- his brother was nothing but blood and pulp.

BONNIE: That's better.

TOM: Look at the end of that first sentence. "...and they aimed the car straight at him, the way they do sometimes, you know". And she goes on, "And I guess the boy, being drunk, too, and scared, kind of lost his head". What does that sound like? What do all those commas do in those sentences?

SKIP: She can't make up her mind.

TOM: Haven't you heard old people sort of keep adding words and phrases while they're talking like the ideas are a little slow in coming?

FRANCES: My mother talks that way sometimes. It's almost like a philosopher.

TOM: Wow, that's right! It's like they have seen all the world and can account for it all of the time. So they add little things in a sentence which will help to explain something, without saying that's what they are doing.

I explained that the passage was from James Baldwin's story, "Sonny's Blues," and is, in fact, a mother telling her son a story. I then asked them to read the passage over a few more times, both aloud and to themselves, and then write the next few sentences that the mother would speak. To do this, they would have to capture her voice and the purpose of the story she was telling. The students' written responses are listed below. They read their writing into the tape recorder and then we discussed each of the pieces.

> Your father kneeled down beside his brother and began to cry and curse the boys in the car.
>
> --Skip

SKIP: I thought it was good except for the last part. I didn't know how to end it.

TOM: The word "curse" bothered me a little. But I bet that mother wouldn't use the word "swore" either. She'd probably use a softer word than "swear." But I'm not sure that she would feel comfortable with "curse."

SKIP: She wouldn't say "curse" and she wouldn't say "swore." She'd say, uh, "cuss." And I think I'd make it "them boys" 'stead of "the boys." It's too gentle.

> And there was nothing your father could do but cry for his dead brother. And that's why I'm telling you not to drive when you're drunk because it can happen to you as well as to your father.
>
> --Bonnie

TOM: You gave a reason for the conversation. What was your first sentence again? (Bonnie reads it.) That's interesting. Both you and Skip have this man crying over his brother. Do you think -- How did you like the moral at the end? Do you think that is the reason the mother was talking to the boy?

SKIP: Well, I thought she was telling the boy about his uncle.

TOM: Why does this mother sound so serious? Is she talking about the uncle?

FRANCES: I guess she's tryin' to get the boy to understand his father more.

TOM: Right! The focus is upon the father, not the person who dies. So that when you write, "and there was nothing the father could do but cry", or "Your father kneeled down beside his brother and cried", you are carrying out the emphasis of the speaker--that mother.

> All he could do was stand there and look at the mess and try to understand what had happened and why. He had tears in his eyes and anger on his face.
>
> --Frances

TOM: How did you like that, Bonnie?

BONNIE: I liked it.

SKIP: The last sentence was the best.

TOM: How does the word "mess" sound to you?

FRANCES: Well, there's nothing left, ya know, but blood and pulp, flesh and bone. I think that's a mess.

(Frances reads her passage again out loud.)

SKIP: When she says "why" the father is the center. That's good.

TOM: Which of the three do you like the best?

FRANCES: They're all good.

TOM: Would you like to continue this sort of thing tomorrow?

SKIP: I'd like to do a play with parts.

TOM: Would one of you direct it?

FRANCES: Skippy could.

SKIP: What'd ya mean, direct?

TOM: Well, like, if someone has a line and they don't say it the right way, you tell them how to say it.

SKIP: Oh, yeah.

TOM: What I've been concerned about here is realizing through writing and reading and speaking that there are other people in the world. And that they are people very different from yourselves. Not only are they different because of the way they look, or where they come from, or their sex, or how old they are, but they are different because of the way they talk and the way they sound. In writing you can really bring out those differences and you can identify the person by the way he talks. That's what we mean by voice. In two more weeks, by the end of this summer, I'll get a piece of writing, and hand it out to the class and you're going to be able to say, THAT'S Frances Earle or THAT'S Bonnie Drayton. People are going to be able to recognize you by what you write and how you write it. And vice-versa, if you want to write about an ice cream vendor, someone is going to read it and say, by god, that guy sounds like he sells ice cream on the streets of Brooklyn.

The following day I brought in a selection from The Invisible Man, by Ralph Ellison. I converted the passage from an extended dialogue into a short play with three speakers:

> Trueblood: I couldn't even let go when I heard Kate scream. It was a scream to make your blood run cold. It sounds like a woman who was watchin' a team of wild horses run down her baby chile and she caint move. Kate's hair is standin' up like she done seen a ghost, her gown is hanging open and the veins in her neck is 'bout to bust. And her eyes! Lawd, them eyes. I'm lookin' up at her from where I'm layin' on the pallet with Matty Lou, and I'm too weak to move. She screams and starts to pickin' up the first thing that comes to her hand and throwin' it. Some of them misses me and some of them hits me. Little things and big things. Somethin' cold and strong-

stinkin' hits me and wets me and bangs against my head. Somethin' hits the wall -- boom-a-loom-a-loom! -- like a cannon ball, and I tries to cover up my head. Kate's talkin' the unknown tongue, like a wild woman.
T-2: Wait a minit, Kate, Stop it!
Trueblood: Then I hears her stop a second and I hears her runnin' across the floor, and I twists and looks and Lawd, she done got my double-barrel shotgun! And while she's foamin' at the mouth and cockin' the gun, she gits her speech.
Kate: Git up! Git up!
T-2: HEY! NAW! KATE!
Kate: Goddam yo' soul to hell! Git up offa my chile!
T-2: But woman, Kate, lissen.
Kate: Don't talk, MOVE!
T-2: Down that thing, Kate!
Kate: No down, UP!
T-2: That there's buckshot, woman, BUCKshot!
Kate: Yes, it is!
T-2: Down it, I say!
Kate: I'm gon blast your soul to hell!
T-2: You gon hit Matty Lou!
Kate: Not Matty Lou--YOU!
T-2: It spreads, Kate. Matty Lou!
Trueblood: She moves around, aimin' at me.
Kate: I done warn you, Jim.
T-2: Kate, it was a dream. Lissen to me.
Kate: You the one who lissen -- UP FROM THERE!
Trueblood: She jerks the gun and I shuts my eyes. But insteada thunder and lightin' bustin' me, I hears Matty Lou scream in my ear. And when I looks up, Maan, Maaan! she's got a iron in her hand!
T-2: No blood, Kate. Don't spill no blood!
Kate You low-down dog, it's better to spill than to foul.
T-2: Naw, Kate. Things ain't what they 'pear! Don't make no blood-sin on accounta no dream-sin!
Kate: Shut up, nigguh. You done fouled!

TOM: Let's see if we can act this thing out. Trouble is, Trueblood's a man, and T-2 is a man.

(Frances reads it with much imitation and drama.)

TOM: Can I interrupt you, Frances?

FRANCES: Yeah.

TOM: How come you're readin it like that?

FRANCES: I was just playin'. (Laughing)

TOM: Playin'? But that's just about the way that guy sounds, isn't it? You weren't reading it: (in monotone) Now I heard Frances Earle read that way (in a monotone) about two weeks ago. I even heard her read that way yesterday.

FRANCES: When? -- two weeks ago? When'd you hear me read like that?

TOM: You've read like that -- everybody's read like that since the course started. Right? And you did it two days ago. But you just picked this thing up and you started -- Read it again like you just read it. Play. Okay, I don't care if you call it "play."

(She reads it again.)

TOM: Okay, who is T-2? Who is the next person speaking?

BONNIE: A man.

TOM: Okay, I shouldn't have put T-2, but can you guess who that is?

BONNIE: Trueblood.

TOM: Yeah, that's right. Now why would I put T-2?

BONNIE: To abbreviate, I guess.

TOM: Okay, but why the "2"? Why the number?

FRANCES: I don't know.

BONNIE: Why would you put T-2 here and Trueblood. --

TOM: If T-2 is also Trueblood -- Is he doing something different when I have T-2 in front of what he says?

BONNIE: Um. I think so.

TOM: Can you guess what it is?

BONNIE: Like "Wait a minute, Kate, stop it." Maybe that's-- that one right there maybe he's yelling or --

TOM: He's yelling it. He's saying it, isn't he? All right, in that paragraph that Frances just read, what's he doing?

FRANCES: Layin' in the porch, getting all beat up, getting throwed at.

TOM: But what's he doing in his speech?

FRANCES: Nothing.

TOM: What kind of a speech would you say that is?

FRANCES: He's telling what's happening --

BONNIE: He's not hollering or anything.

TOM: Not hollerin. But he's telling what's happening, isn't he? He's describing, he's setting the scene, he's painting a picture -- telling a story. Then in that second thing where he says, "Wait a minute, Kate, stop it!" he's in that story, he's doin' somethin... What's happening is that this guy is telling a story. Trueblood is telling a story to two people. And as he tells the story, every once in a while he comes to a point where he says what he said in the situation that he's describing. ... I'm going to tell you a story about buying a car: Frances and Bonnie, I went down to a used car lot yesterday in San Mateo County and I was looking for a used Volkswagen. And it was a hot day, and there weren't many salesmen around, but finally I got somebody's attention. And I said to him, "Mr. Smith, I'm lookin' for a used Volkswagen, about a 1960, 1965." -- See what's happening there? What were the two things I just did in speech?

FRANCES: You told us about what was happening, what you did yesterday.

TOM: And then I did what?

FRANCES: And then you started talking to the salesman.

TOM: Right. And the first Trueblood is the guy telling the story. T-2 is also Trueblood, but it's Trueblood in the story. Now, the author does this. Let me read to you from Ralph Ellison's book called _The Invisible Man_.

(_I read a short passage_.)

BONNIE: Is this a Negro or a white?

TOM: Who do you think it is? (_Long silence_)

BONNIE: Sounds black to me.

FRANCES: Sounds like somebody from the South -- Matty Lou.

TOM: Does that sound like a southern name?

FRANCES: Yeah -- Matty Lou....

TOM: Now, Bonnie says it sounds like a Negro. Why does it sound like a Negro to you, Bonnie?

BONNIE: 'Cause -- you know, some of 'em, they haven't had very much schooling. It sounds just like -- "Lawd, them eyes." You know, somebody that goes to church all the time, you know, is gonna say "Lawd" -- (_Laughing_) And all that stuff.

TOM: Yeah, and look at the fourth line, how she pronounces "cannot," or "can't".

BONNIE: "Caint."

TOM: "Caint." Remember how the other day we were talking about if I was a city boy and I said I was going to get me a car. How would you spell "get"?

BONNIE: G-e-t.

TOM: And if I was a country boy and I said, "I'm going down the country an git me a woman."

BONNIE: G-i-t.

TOM: And that's one of the ways you can tell something about the language and something about people. And look here, look how he spelled "can't". How's he spell it?

BONNIE: C-a-i-n-t.

TOM: Now one of the things is that when you read it -- let's say you read it silently. You don't have to read it in front of a tape recorder. One of the things you know immediately is, that person isn't educated, or that person is speaking in a certain sort of way. But when you read it out loud, not only is it misspelled, but it sounds a certain way. And when you hear it sounded out -- "caint" -- you force yourself to listen to it. And then you see it. And you see what that person's done with his speech. And this writer is not trying to cover that fact up. In fact he's really emphasizing it. He wants you to know something about that person who's speaking. Let's act this thing out.

(Reading. Frances is Trueblood, Bonnie is Kate, and Mark, a Stanford student is T-2.)

TOM: Do you know what's happening?

BONNIE: (Laughing loudly, almost crying) What's happening?

TOM: What do you think it means when she says, "You done foul"?

BONNIE: You have messed up.

TOM: Yeah, that's right. How do you think he's messed up?

FRANCES: He just went out with her daughter.

BONNIE: (Laughing) He slept with her daughter.... Oh, what a play! Oh God.

GWEN: (Another CSM student who comes to our table out of curiosity.) Where you get this at?

TOM: It's out of this book, Gwen. Finally, she does hit him with the axe, right across the head. Doesn't kill him, but it sure does tear him up. All right Bonnie, you ought to do it again. I know you can get better than that. -- and Mark --

GWEN: Mark is too polite!

TOM: (Laughing) All right, coach Mark. What's wrong with it? What's he doing?

FRANCES: Gotta put the feeling into it. (Laughing)

GWEN: Was that you who was reading it all along?

TOM: Yeah -- Well, he was just reading the T-2 part. Why didn't Mark sound like he was alive to you?

BONNIE: 'Cause -- he was talkin' like Mark. I mean he talked like he was regular talkin' -- "Hey naw, Kate," that's what he said.

TOM: How should he have said it?

BONNIE: "Hew naw, Kate." (Shouting)

TOM: He's saying "no" -- "Hey naw! Kate!" She's comin' with this goddam shotgun sayin' "Git up, git up!" -- "Hey naw, Kate!" (Laughter) "Git up off my chile!"

BONNIE: You do it so good! (Laughing)

TOM: It's not that Mark's just talkin too much like himself, but Frances, who's reading and telling this story, is reading with more expression than T-2.

GWEN: You really are!

TOM: All right, Gwen, I want to read a part. You want to read a part?

GWEN: No. (softly)

FRANCES: Yeah! Git it!

GWEN: I can't.

FRANCES: Be Kate. You can't?

TOM: (sing-song) She can't say, "Shut up, nigger." (Laughter)

FRANCES: Go on.

TOM: I'll be Trueblood. Bonnie, you be T-2.

GWEN: I can't do this.

FRANCES: Speak. Forget yourself.

GWEN: How do you sound like you come from a --

FRANCES: "You all" and --

TOM: Oh yeah, Kate's Trueblood's wife, and he is a tenant sharecropper, Negro tenant sharecropper in --

BONNIE: Kate's wife?

TOM: Kate is Trueblood's wife.

BONNIE: And Matty Lou is the daughter.

TOM: Yeah. So what you want to sound like is a forty-year-old Negro woman, who's married to a rural farmer, sharecropper, very poor Negro and you just woke up in a dingy old cabin and find your husband sittin' on top of your daughter. He isn't exactly sittin', either. (Laughing)

GWEN: Well, that must be her stepfather, then, right?

N

BONNIE: We don't know. I don't know. (Bonnie answers with the voice of a young English teacher. She sounded so professional it scared me.)

GWEN: "Git up. Git up." I can't -- (Starts to read Kate's part and stops)

TOM: Okay, go ahead and read it and we'll listen to it afterwards and you can see what you didn't quite do. Go ahead.

(Reading)

TOM: You turned into a real bitch in the middle of that, Gwen. (Laughter) But you know, the last thing that you said -- you aid "Shut up, nigger, you done foul." That last sentence -- you didn't keep it up. -- God, that's good, Gwen. Hey, I got an idea for tomorrow....

My idea was to have these three students produce and direct the reading of this passage with the other students in the larger class. They were excited about the possibility and directed the entire class by themselves. I played back the tape of the above class and let them hear themselves coaching each other on the various parts. And the following day they were able to do the same thing without any direction from the Stanford teachers.

Two days later, after the entire class had read and acted out the section from The Invisible Man, we wrote the following words on the blackboard: Mamma, oooooo, MAMA! This was the scream of Matty Lou's which I had deleted from the original dialogue. Now we were going to use it as the basis of a writing assignment. We discussed the sound of the scream, the way that Ellison had written the three words to give them emphasis and feeling, and the possibilities of learning about Matty Lou just from this one scream. Then we asked each of them to write a few sentences in the voice of Matty Lou, describing her feelings, or saying what she would say in this situation.

The writing was done in class and then each student read his piece for the class. Each was recorded and played back for the writer. They were hesitant at first but before the class was over all of the students had read.

LYNNE: Well, you read yours. That's what you should do.

TOM: I believe you're next in line.

LYNNE: No I'm not. No, no, no.

PAT: Go on read yours, Lynne --

LYNNE: I don't have one.

TOM: What's that?

KIM: What's this?

LYNNE: That's a hunk o' junk.

PAT: "Hunk o' junk." Go ahead!

TOM: You read yours first.

LYNNE: No.

PAT: Lynne, go along with the game, now -- read yours first.

TOM: Okay. I will read.

> Mama! Ooooooo mama! Daddy did done gone crazy an' is tryin' to git me. (Laughter --- "shhhhh") Stop Daddy! Please git up off me! Mama, he's a hurtin! -- stop him -- knock him off!
>
> --Tom

(Much laughter)

TOM: Why are you all screamin!? (More laughter) You don't think I should say that?

GWEN: Uh uh.

TOM: Okay, why not?

BONNIE: Like "knock him off" -- What'd you say?

TOM: I said: "Mama, Ooooo mama, Daddy did done gone crazy an' is tryin' to git me. Stop, Daddy! Please git up off me." I don't like that.

PAT: I wouldn't say "please." She shouldn't say "please." She should be havin' fits --

TOM: But it is her daddy.

PAT: Yeah, I know it's her daddy --

GWEN: But you still wouldn't say "please."

TOM: Okay.

PAT: --an' "knock him off" --

TOM: "Mama, he's hurtin'. Stop him. Knock him off." ... Well? Now she said "please," and you think that's too polite, and you think "knock him off" is too strong? What would she say?

PAT: Probably somethin' like -- I don't want to read this. I don't know. But I know she wouldn't say -- you know.

TOM: Yeah, Well, what I was trying to do -- first of all she says, "Daddy did done gone crazy an' is tryin' to git me." And she sorta screams that out into the room. And then she looks at her daddy, and she says, "Stop Daddy! Please git up off me!" She's sort of pleading with him. And finally you know, "Mama, he's hurtin'. Stop him, knock him off," anything, just get him away. That's the way I thought of it.

FRANCES: Why'd you think of that?

TOM: What -- (Laughter) What'd you think of it, Lynne? What were you all giggling and getting up and messing around for?

LYNNE: I was thinkin' it.

TOM: You mean it wasn't any good?

GIRLS: GOOD!

Listed below are a few more examples of the students' writing for this assignment. Each of them is reproduced exactly as it was written. The class caught the tension of the situation and in writing rendered it in the excited, halting, and alarmed voice of Matty Lou. They gave speech to a personality. As each student read his passage, the emotion of the scene was captured with inflection and intensity and rhythm. The control of grammar and spelling has heightened the reality of the speaker and the content of the speech.

> Ahhh shit, Trueblood, if you don't get your big ass off me. Mama, git this nigguh off a me!
>
> --Pat

> I'm awakened by my father bein' pulled off by my mother. I run and I'm a standin' by Daddy. I'm as stiff as a log. Mama cussin' an' a hittin'. Mama picks up a buckshot an' aims at Daddy. I run to the door screamin' "Mama, Oooooo Mama." Still hollerin' I say, "Mama, Lord Mama, what have Pa done?"
>
> --Bonnie

> Mama, Oooo Mama! Daddy, you dirty old man, get the hell off a me! Mama, tell him to get the hell off a me. Damned if I sleep on that old pallet with you all again. You better stop messin' around with me and find you another girl. Mama, stop from that. Mama, stop -- now. Hit him with the axe! If I wasn't under him I'd use it myself. You better go get you a five cents whore on the corner an' lets me alone.
>
> --Frances

These four classes reflect much of the scope and purpose of the Voice Project during the summer and throughout the year. We began by reading and listening to spoken passages in order to identify the speaker. To do this we had to focus upon rhythm, word choice, control of dialect and accent, and the sounds of language. Then we moved to student imitations of other voices, both in writing and speaking, in order to emphasize variations among characters and authors and people that we hear every day. The dramatic readings enabled students to experience the excitement of words in speech as well as the power of capturing human dialogue in writing. Writing a voice for a new character was the final extension of a process that moved from identification to reproduction and imitation to creation. In the last week of the program we had the students write their own speeches about topical issues. In this exercise they moved closer to the possibility of creating and revealing their personal writing voices.

V. ASSIGNMENTS AND STUDENTS' WRITING

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

As in any Freshman English program in which assignments are not rigidly defined by a course syllabus, writing assignments in the Voice Project varied according to the interests of individual teachers. But in every class students were, at times, asked to write on conventional topics (a critical analysis of a short story, a Swiftian modest proposal) and occasionally were free to write about whatever they wished. In all classes students did several kinds of writing: narrative and critical pieces, personal essays, poetry or fiction, etc. At the same time, teachers continually tried out unconventional assignments. And it is mainly those assignments that are represented here. We have, however, included a few conventional assignments (*e.g.*, "a childhood recollection") that seemed to lead students to materials they especially cared about.

We have selected the writing of three students to illustrate the range of assignments. Two of these students, Kathy Arbuckle and Helene Zimnicki, were chosen because their papers seem to illustrate particular assignments well. The third, Jim Kilgore, was selected because his work showed marked improvement throughout the year; his writing clearly moved from voiceless prose (in which his own presence as writer was missing) to prose which shows the emergence of his own voice and his ability to control the experiences he tries to render. Examples of assignments not contained in the work of these three students are included in the section that follows, "Additional Selected Assignments." For the sake of brevity, we have occasionally excerpted students' writing, as deletion marks indicate.

KATHY ARBUCKLE

1) Assignment: A childhood recollection.

...Memories of childhood come from another day left far behind, provoking in me a sense of clear separation from the small innocent child I used to be. I see that child image running, climbing, laughing, crying while I now loom over it, watching with a bewildered smile of disbelief; for I'd like to rediscover that image now long gone.

The buckeye tree below the house on the side of the hill was good for climbing because its limber branches leaned and gently swung under my weight. When my sisters watched television or climbed the plum tree in search of sour fruit, I'd head toward the buckeye tree. They thought very little of my desire to climb a plain buckeye tree that would soon become a bore to merely move around upon. But when the wind blew strong causing the tree to sway, the natural rhythm of movement invited me to sing, to make my voice part of the sounds of wind and tree, and other times to stand silently high in the tree looking through its branches, wondering if I might slip and fall.

...Reminiscing about childhood days, I see short, quick images of a thin, long-legged, short-haired, brown girl spying around the corner of the house on the dog asleep on the patio; sitting cross-legged beneath a ladder leaning against the side of the house with two kittens in her lap, smiling proudly as if they were of her own creation; waving her arms in madness to rid the raspberry patch of birds; standing soaking wet on a box beside the car, hose in hand, happy to be working on such a project as washing the car. I remember mostly happy times under blue skies.

2) Assignment: Create an impression of something concrete, an experience from childhood or a place; then write another piece treating these materials analytically.

The stiff stalks of the grass seemed almost to loom taller than my height as I glanced occasionally above me to see if I were being watched or spied upon. I saw only the sky and smiled suspiciously, expecting to be jumped upon from all sides. Crawling about on my knees, I became smaller than usual...I could not lose myself. The oak tree, with its many branches reaching out over the tall grass, waved its arms in the breeze, always giving me direction.... ----I do not see you, Father Tree. I deny you space to occupy, air to breathe. I push you aside; I spurn you; I chop you with my knife; I burn you with fire; I dig the dirt up from around you.----Never did I dare climb Father Tree; I feared the envelopment of His arms. Looking always up at Father Tree was like looking up at an outstretched hand ready to grab at anything less powerful than itself. Father Tree was no father.

Analysis

As a child, my father always accused me of guilt through lack of direction. He said all I knew of life was spontaneity and that I should order my life to give it value. But I was just a kid. I heard only his voice of dislike and rejection of what I judged as being fun. He even told my mother that I needed supervision, and that if I wanted to play, I should play with the other kids on the playground down the street. My father was a rightful figure who wanted to end all of my childlike fantasy and fun.

...The day my father climbed the oak tree in the backyard was the day I began to also fear that monstrosity of a tree. I was crawling along on my knees through the tall stalks of grass that had recently turned brown when I looked above me, saw the tree, and became horrified at the sight of my father sitting on a limb high above, sneering down at me with his habitual gaze of accusation. I quickly shut my eyes and tried to hide myself. But because he was above me, I could not escape his gaze. He eventually climbed down from the tree and returned to the house. He never spoke to me about it. From that day onward I fearfully hated the oak tree and always expected to see my father's eyes gazing down upon me as I played my childish games.

3) Assignment: Write a letter you cannot send.

Outsider,

She doesn't care anymore, or so she says. She screams and pulls at her hair to no avail when she's alone in her room, but no one hears her, or at least no one mentions a word about it. On the other hand, she is very quiet. She studies constantly in complete silence. Few people know her name much less that she really lives in that little room three flights up, the first door on the right. (No, she doesn't really scream out loud; she'd be too afraid to draw attention. But she does pull at her hair occasionally when she is not biting her fingers.)

She never wonders what I'm doing, whether I'm fishing, drinking, eating, smoking, reading, sleeping, or grocery shopping all day long. No salutation, greetings, or good-byes. She just writes again and again reminding me that she's just thinking. It is like a phantasmagorial fantasy, this dream life of hers; all sorts of things are happening, but there's no pattern. She sees chaos in herself, and yet it means something to her. She finds it all pleasantly frustration.

It's no use. Quit badgering me, I say to her, leave me alone and work things out for yourself. She is so preoccupied with her every thought and action that she insists upon knowing the purpose and answer to everything. She hates herself for loving herself and ends up feeling totally indifferent —yet she cares, I know she does or else she wouldn't keep writing over and over again as if wanting someone to give her strength. However, she would never write again if I wrote back to her---she would feel ashamed that she had revealed her weaknesses to an outsider.

On second thought, sometimes she is fine; she is normal. She worried about not having time to wash her hair and eating unbalanced meals. She used to wear make-up; now she wears none. She's reading more now, just incidental novels that look appealing. She is no crazier than you or I. In her last letter, she wrote me this:

> Words resounding in my brain
> I hate them all
> Yesterday, today, tomorrow, no matter
> Everything slowly changes
> Continents and inhabitants both
> but not in unison.
> I cannot give of nothing, of straw or hay which
> neither are mine
> of nature's beauty untouchable.
> No one tells of what is or of what is not.
> All tell, all shout, jeer, and make spectacles.

Then she lapses into a relaxed mood and writes:

> Just running
> harmonica plaintive all feeling
> touching grass, trees
> long-haired girls
> lying sideways giving no chance for
> profile drawings except from the
> air above.
> Out in the breeze
> cooling my closed eyes
> and quickly I rise
> grabbing, stretching
> hauling my body up
> til I'm just running.

I don't make much of it, only that she cannot seem to make up her mind about something. Oh well, I suppose it's not for me to understand. She's probably obsessed with herself. I cannot help her. No longer can I bear to act as her only escape. I don't know, really. I just don't know. At any rate, I'm tired, and I loathe having to write something seemingly coherent to an outsider. It's done now. Can you help her? Lift your head from sleep and find out where she's running.

Dej

4) Assignment: Make something ordinary extraordinary.

I sat nearby watching him as he leaned over his desk and posed his pen, ready to mark with words the paper underneath his hand. I thought no, he won't do it, he won't write a letter, he won't use a mess of words and a flimsy piece of paper to write something senseless. It would have been alright if he had decided to telephone; at least it would have been spontaneous and not contrived. Now he is actually writing a word on the paper with ink from the pen in his hand. After all this time away from home, and now he says to me that he simply must keep in touch, he must write. I tried to stop him but he was insistent. Finally I warned him that he would regret it, but he just laughed. He has written one half of a page already. He is putting his pen down, thanks. Surely he doesn't intend to mail such an invention. There is the envelope---he is reaching for it. The letter lies inside the envelope; the seal is moistened. With one quick gesture of the hand, it is sealed. The fabrication is complete.

5) Assignment: Create some sounds; in other words, try to make the reader "hear" sounds.

...Lonely words evoke yet another sound. Emptiness pervades futile questioning, and unresolved thoughts are painful sounds in the mind. Yes, lonely thoughts induce hesitant and many times silent sounds. Sometimes the silent sound overcomes me as I'm climbing up the stairs to my room, pretending I'm somebody else for a moment---I see no one, no one passes me during the time I climb up three flights of stairs, for I'm all at once alone in my room. I do not know where all the girls hide, perhaps they are sleeping.
I find my pretending to be someone other than myself on the stairs has carried through to my room and has made me feel more alone---so I sit down on my bed and wonder what is missing, all the while evoking the silent sound of

self-questioning----
Dear one, where have you gone? Shall I draw back the curtains and see you there leaning against the window, looking out or staring into the night? On future days, when I come in late in the darkness, will you be humbled upon my soft rug by the bed asleep, or will you be sitting at my desk asking questions of the flame in a candle? If I stay out for nights at a time, will you have revived the dying red roses balanced in my whiskey bottle given to me by my father that stands on the third book shelf amongst other clutter? When I next open the door will I be met by the cold from an open window; will I shiver and yet be glad to find that you have thrown out the old watery cup of tea that had been for so many days immovable upon my desk? No, you have gone. I do not find you standing at the window gazing out or resting beside my bed, nor do I find you sitting at my desk in childlike wonderment. You have gone. Though I return to my room and find it as before, somewhat paltry and in need of further arrangement, I sense you have left me something. I wonder if I look through my books I will find that you have underlined a few words for me. Or maybe I will find a hole burned into the under side of my pillow, knowing that you tried to save the fire or at least a small flame of light. Did you maybe take something or leave a black crayon with which I should color my face and stone with which to close my eyes? No, it seems you took nothing and left even less. Sitting on my bed, looking out my window, I cannot see the sky now, the moon is behind the clouds with stars; I see nothing out my window but my own reflection. Me standing in my room. Me sitting on my floor, leaning against my bed, asking the cold to freeze me, to numb my blood, to steady my head. But the window is closed, the heater is on, and I feel the heat rising in this narrow vacuum of my room, or my mind.

6) **Assignment:** Write a tall tale. (See "The Classroom Experience," class of April 4.)

John Henry

It was colder than snow weather, and our small plains town seemed darker than any shadow cast by the night.

Ma and Pa were in the kitchen drinking hot black water and sitting facing each other at the table. I was supposed to be asleep, but the slow pounding of the wind made me sleepless. Ma and Pa were terrible upset over John Henry, and they were going to awful pains wondering where he was and what he was doing. But I knew John Henry better than the both of them. Some people called John Henry dirty, but he was a good brother. Still, I knew it was true what he did at night away from me and Ma and Pa.

Girls like John Henry so much that they fall lovesick for days, and the doctor sends them to bed for rest and quiet. I remember when Mary Ann's face just shriveled up and seemed to fade away from between her ears, for John Henry has a powerful kiss, and he isn't known to be wasteful. All girls turn red and feel weak when they see John Henry, but if John Henry touches a girl's hair, their palms turn to clay, their hair loses its curl, and more than often, they develop a rash over their whole body. Mary Jane came close to death last year, and her ma took her away from town to cure her. And poor Mary Ellen just cried when John Henry left her until her eyes were so swollen that they wouldn't open, and she became blind. Once I asked John Henry to explain to me how he does it, but he just said: "Mary Sue, you're yet too cleverly clear."

HELEN ZIMNICKI

1) Assignment: A childhood recollection.

On sunny afternoons after school, my best friend Madelyn and I would play funeral. I really don't understand why we held this terrible fascination for death but I do recall the gleeful "terror" I experienced while looking at scarey pictures in Mad's parents' ghost story book. Despite a show of sadness, I really loved to find dead things -- dead birds, dead flies, dead spiders. Upon discovering a dead "thing," Madelyn and I would skip to our graveyard in the local drainage ditch and bury the thing. We prolonged the burial as long as possible. I read prayers; Madelyn arranged rocks around the little mound. We both picked weed flowers for the final step of the funeral. Often Mad and I would actually put a poor helpless ladybug out of the misery of living this life by stabbing it with a straight pin. There was a period of mourning but the same glee in buying it. Now the really big thing was to bury an animal -- a bird, turtle, or lizard. In my backyard I buried a bird and was tempted to dig it up again. My mother stopped me. She said that dead animals are germy -- that bacteria gets to them.

It took a while before I connected death and decomposition with humans. As far as I was concerned a person lay in repose in his casket forever and ever. The soul went to heaven and the body remained intact on earth. However I eventually was able to see the connection between animals and humans and discovered (not entirely on my own) one thing which upset me deeply -- that humans decompose....

2) Assignment: Write an impression/analysis.

My mother lay in the big bed sleeping -- her mouth open and her eyes closed. No glasses. She looked like Sleeping Beauty or Rose Red or even Snow White. She had one arm behind her head -- the other dangled over the side. Her dark hair was messed all over the pillow -- curly and long...The room was not dark and it was early in the morning. It was quiet except that my mother breathed loudly and my father kind of snorted every few minutes. My mother's hair was soft but fingers would not go through it because it hadn't been brushed.

My parents slept longer than I did, I woke up early and sometimes stood and stared at them sleeping. It gave me a strange feeling to see my parents sleeping. I felt lonely because they did not quite seem alive but I was also happy. My mother looked prettier sleeping. I was aware always of physical imperfection. I did not like glasses (my mother had silver-wired ones); I did not like the mole my mother had on her chin. I did not like to see pregnant women -- I hated beards -- I did not like broken legs and crutches. My four-year-old's image of my parents asleep in a semi-light room is clear only because I can still feel the thoughts that I had even then.

3) Assignment: Make something commonplace extraordinary.

There, in my parfait glass, were squares -- cubes -- of jiggly jello:

red, yellow, green. And on top, a blob of runny whipped cream. I put a piece of jello, a green piece, on my spoon and secretly contemplated it. I stared at the girls around my table through it -- they looked green. And inside this cube were little round things, like balls of mercury freed from a thermometer I once chewed by mistake. Little tiny shiny balls inside a green cube of jello. Too bad I couldn't be in it to see what they were -- inside a world of rubbery jello. What was even more interesting was the way the jello felt to my finger when I pushed it down -- moist, resilient -- like an eyeball. I knew that my nail would ruin the smooth surface but I kept pushing the jello with my finger -- feeling the coldness and eyeballishness of it.

4) Assignment: Verse and prose statement on the same theme.

Stars, millions of miles, millions of miles
        and I lay on the chaise lounge staring
        on a smoggy night.
There's only me -- that's all I care and
        who will when I die.

So you think you know me --
                you don't.
no one does -- nor will anyone ever because
there are things that I suspect myself
but won't show -- too embarrassing.
But I like you, so we can be friends;
we can talk about the serious, 'deep'
  things in life like sex and death and war but
  leave me out --
  I hate to be known.

The first poem is more or less a mood I get into when I look at the stars or the sky -- very melodramatic -- I feel so sorry for myself because I have to die and I will never know anything about things on this planet and off this planet...and of course I realize that nobody knows what it is like to be dead.

The second "poem" is just one of my moody protests -- I get tired of people trying to find out what I am like -- maybe I don't really but it bothers me when they find out something I would rather not admit.

) Assignment: Create some sounds; in other words, try to make the reader "hear" sound.

Silence -- Tarnished Thoughts on the Value of Gold.

There must be something wrong with me because I don't really like silence -- there is no such thing as absolute silence in my world anyway, only silence interrupted. Silence seems to amplify noise. When I was younger I used to lie in bed praying for the heat to blow on to absorb the sounds that interrupted it -- my sister's salivary breathing, my father's snoring, the imagined cricking ankles and padded steps down the hallway. If I listened to the outside of the house I would hear cars swishing down the highway and every so often, a loud crack (undoubtedly the cement base of the house splitting). And then I would think and the darkness and quietness seemed to amplify my thinking voice. Sometimes I would put my ear to my cat's chest and listen to her breathing and her heart beating (I slept with my cat until she died last March) and I would try to regulate my own lungs to her fast breathing. And eventually my own breathing put me back to sleep.

Now (even now) I don't really like any silence because I do not like unpatterned sounds -- and one can't trust quiet to be silence because it is always interrupted -- if not, it would not really be silence it would be deafness. I don't like the cacaphonic irregularity of voices in the dining room...little phrases of sounds, clatters of dishes, chews, swallows. But then, I also create the noise.

My own room blares with loud music. I turn up the radio to increase my own concentration and I do like the patterned rhythm and noise of music... but only when I can regulate the sound.

I have sometimes tried to go to quiet places (my high school biology teacher told us that people live the longest in a place in Africa where all day long there is not a sound above a whisper -- maybe they don't live longer but healthier) but I think I am beyond hope because quiet places make me think too loudly.

6) Free assignment.

Ben Haywood

I think that Ben must practice everyday being fatal. He is handsome, yes, but his mannerisms, his way of speaking and what he says are fatal to me. I always smile when I see him or even hear about him because Ben is irrestible. Ben is beautiful (as my girlfriend Susan puts it). He is a Negro, very tall, very broad-shouldered (he climbs trees for a living), and bearded. I call him sensuous (sexy does not describe him) because he is pleasing to all of my senses (outside of taste). He likes to charm me; he'll tickle my neck or barely hold my hand or pick me up or smile. His lines are original because they are not lines...and I wonder how anyone can be so charming all day. Susan says that he doesn't have to be; he just has to stand there with his shirt open at the neck. I never really noticed Ben's body before my friend Elyse mentioned it-- In fact, I never really knew Ben. He is the best friend of Yohannes and I know Yohannes better. I can remember seeing Ben at a party -- dancing..and I remember his pouring me a glass of milk at another party. I remember how he held a girl's head with both hands as he talked to her and how he shook my hand when I first met him. I can see him walking down Telegraph Avenue with his arm hanging around Carol or Amber and I see him in the dark talking to Ruthie, the ex-topless dancer....

I like to listen to Ben talk maybe because he likes to listen to me talk. He'll talk about how he ate his sister's mudpies or how his mother weighs 215 lbs. or how he saw "Black Orpheus" five times. Once he told me how he wants to move to Turlock and grow flowers. He likes to watch children and he seems to be very kind to most people. Sometimes he scares me a little because he notices almost every small thing that I do. But he just doesn't notice my actions but those of everybody around him. I like Ben and sometimes I think I idealize because I don't really know him. But I like him because he notices me and he understands me a little bit because he doesn't know me too well.

JIM KILGORE

1) Assignment: A childhood recollection.

I followed the doctor into a small basement room. A single shade lamp suspended from the ceiling burned brightly, shedding its intense rays on a nude, pale corpse. The inert figure, outstretched on a yellowed procelain table, lay on its back. It's masculine features were exposed by the revealing rays of the lamp. I didn't notice any other features of the room. I just stared at this ghastly figure. Shock had overcome my senses. I couldn't leave for I was restrained by a paralyzing force.....

My eyes drifted back to the pale outstretched corpse. My thoughts ran in a wild, irrational pattern. All at once I hated the room, the doctor, the men standing in the corner reading the newspaper, and most of all I hated that hideous, revolting figure reposing on the table.....

2) Assignment: Write an impression/analysis.

I followed the doctor into a small basement room. On a table to my right lay the corpse of a man. The body was naked, its white skin cold, soft, and smooth. Grey hair covered the upper chest and appeared in a tangled pattern about the crotch and upper legs. The man's hands, laying at his side, were relaxed, the fingers curled inward towards the palms. The face, turned upwards with eyes closed and lips sealed, expressed a deep sleep.

Never before did I believe that a human could cease to think or talk and just disappear, his life gone. To me man's life, my life, had an essence of immortality. Now I was forced to look at one of these "immortals" transformed into an inert, rotting mass of flesh. This picture could not be made any clearer, yet to accept it as truth was the most difficult task ever put before me or any man.

3) Assignment: A monologue.

You didn't know Bobby, did you? Neither did I, really, until last winter when he got sick. That's when I used to come over after school to tell him the homework assignments and just sit and talk to him for a while. This was his room; I can hardly recognize it now -- it's so bare; even the old grey rug is gone. These shelves used to be full of books. Bobby had all the Hardy Boy stories and more sea story books than I've ever seen. He'd let me borrow one anytime I wanted to. Sometimes I'd sit by his desk and leaf through a book or just watch Bobby work with his stamp collection. He would often sit there in the corner where the desk was and work with his stamps for hours, putting them in a large album. I started collecting stamps myself and even offered a few to Bobby, but I could never find a stamp that Bobby didn't already have.

Oh! I wonder what happened to the plants we put here by the window. The raspberry bush and that orange tree we grew from a seed-- They're gone, probably thrown away; but maybe not, Bobby's mother might have let Bobby keep them. She had always cared for them before, making sure they had plenty of water. She even told me one day that it was a good idea to have a few plants in the room, but violets or zineas, she thought, would be better....

4) Free assignment.

I could hear the sound of rushing water off in the distance. I looked ahead from the stern of my canoe but saw only the two other canoes moving slowly down river. They were quite far ahead now and just about to disappear around the next bend. I started to paddle harder and told Biff, my bowboy, to paddle faster. After each stroke the canoe lunged forward with the boy rising up above the water's surface and then falling back again. We quickly passed by many spruce, fir, and poplar that stood on the bank of the river; beyond them stood more of the same trees which formed an impenetrable forest, a forest that seemed to have no end....

The canoe began to move forward even faster, carried along by a stronger current. The roar of falling water became louder, and ahead I could see the current swirl abruptly to the right. We paddled quickly towards the far shore to escape the water's powerful force. As we moved closer to the shore the current became even stronger. The canoe was pulled farther down river but there was little we could do but continue to race against the current....

5) Free assignment.

The last time I saw Grandpa, he told me all about the Seattle World's Fair and how bad it was. He said it was just another big, cheap circus that everyone played up to be a great family amusement. The place was filled with what Grandpa called junky shops and boutiques where clever crooks waited to take your money. He told me that even without wasting your money on souvenirs you'd go broke paying for meals and hotel bills if you stayed there longer than a couple of days.

Grandpa wanted to take a ride up the Space Needle and maybe have dinner up there, but there were people crowded around the elevator entrance, and he said it wasn't worth waiting for, so he didn't. That wasn't the worst of it either, for he said you couldn't see much of anything at the fair unless you were willing to wait in line or shuffle through a crowd. And I know Grandpa, he wouldn't fight a crowd for anything.

"I can't see why so many people would go to the city to see a thing like that," said Grandpa. "It's just plain awful."

6) Assignment: Try to capture on the written page some of the qualities of John Wakabayashi's voice that you heard on tape. (See "The Classroom Experience," classes of January 9, 16, and November 21, 29.)

Yes, I can remember our trip to Yosemite pretty well. It took us almost a day to get there. But it was fun. I spent the whole trip in the back seat of our station wagon with my little brother who just slept in that big cardboard box that Mom put him in. It was a box that had "CHEERIOS" written on it, but I don't think my brother knew what it said because he just slept there wrapped in a small blanket. I don't even think he knew he was in a box at all. Mom didn't pay too much attention to him after we started; she doesn't usually worry about my brother when he's sleeping... Mom, she spent the whole trip telling my dad what a wonderful time we would have at the park. She talked while Dad drove, but I looked out the window at the trees and telephone poles that seemed to swoosh past us. Sometimes I would look ahead to see if I could read the road signs before they rushed by. But I could hardly recognize any words, and the signs were moving so fast.... After awhile I gave up trying to read them at all.

We passed by a lot of mountains, too. I could watch them for a long time. They weren't moving very fast. Most of them looked bare, but some had little patches of green and brown on them. I thought about asking Dad if we could stop awhile and go climb one, but I didn't because I wanted to get to the park.

7) Free assignment.

You work all day. You paddle - portage - make lunch - move on - stop - make camp. It's dark. You unroll your sleeping bag and crawl in. When you open your eyes again, you see the early sun trying to push through the side of the tent -- or you see nothing but hear a light pitter-patter on the tight canvas above you. If you hear that pelting sound, you sigh and squirm back into the depth of the bag. But if the sun is out you get up and cook oatmeal for yourself and the rest of the campers who are rising groggy-eyed from their tents. You eat. Then tin cups and spoons are washed, tents and sleeping bags rolled up, and everything is packed back into the canoes waiting on the shoreline....

The next morning, perhaps, you awake to the gentle pitter-patter of rain falling on the tent and paper leaves above you. The others are asleep. The spruce and fir are quiet. You see them there through the tent door as soon as you lift up the flaps. The whole forest is covered with a chalky mist and the lake is a blank grey wall, but you can hear tiny droplets hitting the water's surface. It sounds like the tinging of small pebbles pelting a frozen lake. You can hear the rain falling through the aspen trees; but the evergreens are still quiet. Their bristly needles catch the small droplets. The fan shaped branches are dark green, tipped with glass. You stir in the dull pitter-patter, dragging a log towards the pile of rocks and the heap of wet ashes. Your hands feel no change when you drop it and grab the cold slippery handle of the axe. The flailing axe bites through the stillness and two heads poke through the front of the tent. A voice calls from another, but it is lost in a loud bellowing voice, "Up and r-o-l-l."...

The boys paddle harder. Rain suits come off, back and shoulder muscles strain under the dark tanned skins. Your bowboy says he can hear the falls; you hear, too.... a powerful pulsating roar. You race the boys to get there. Paddles splash and flash in the clean air. A canoe lurches and tips. You laugh, and the two boys in the water come up from behind and tip you.

8) **Assignment:** Write a tall tale. (See "The Classroom Experience," class of April 4.)

The Holy Water

I remember we'd run out of whiskey, and all of Mrs. Johnston's glasses were dirty or broken, but she just smiled like a happy child and pulled out a stack of paper cups from the cupboard over the kitchen sink. I stood beside her and Warner leaning over the sink and put ice in the paper cups as Warner poured in the Sherry, wine, or whatever it was.

Warner mixed the last drink and turned slowly towards me, pivoting on his feet like the trunk of a large toppling tree. His blinking eyes were as pink as the curtains drawn shut across the window behind the sink. He looked down at the filled cups, grabbed one and poured the drink down his throat. I took a small sip from the cup nearest me. Warner filled his cup again and started to mumble something about the Easter water. I couldn't hear him; Francis and Rolly were dancing around the kitchen looking for their drinks while Sonny and Biddy played the guitars for the crowd in the living room. Warner finished another drink and moved towards me, reaching for the bottle just as Francis tried to take it for himself. Warner then grabbed my wrist with his free hand. "We'll go get th'Easter water now," he hollered, and then pointed a shaky finger at Rolly and Francis. "Here, they'll tell you -- the Easter water's Holy. Hurry up now." (He released my arm) "Go get your coat and we'll go. We'll see the sun dance after."

We were all in my car as I next remember. Sonny had brought along his guitar to play a tune, a Polka he said, for the sun to dance to. Somehow we arrived a few minutes before sunrise at a stream near Francis' place. Everyone rushed out into the grey with empty liquor bottles. Someone handed me a milk bottle, and I followed behind Warner who floated and tumbled towards the stream. He didn't fall but kept going until his ankles and then his knees were immersed in Holy water. Warner filled his two wine bottles and drank. The others were drinking the Holy and they yelled at me to hurry up before it was too late. I lowered my bottle into the stream and then lifted it up again. I shouted at Warner, grabbed one of his wine bottles and threw mine, filled with whiteness, back to the cow's tit.

9) **Assignment:** Respond to Ballad of the Sad Cafe by Carson McCullers.

The Ballad of Evil

"Satan so hated the world that he gave man his only begotten son."

From stifling heat, dust and silence, Satan created a crooked cat-like figure, a creation embodying all imperfections, and a being destined to destroy the soul, the spirit, and the body of any human it touched.

Cousin Lymon, the Messiah of Satan, was made flesh with the beginning of evil, and since then he has traveled on with a mission of gaining disciples and destroying man. Lymon can travel anywhere, but like a malignant disease he has to wait until a cut or a sore is layed open to decadence -- he has to find a town, a village, or just one man, whose soul is distressed or hateful, caked with dust or parched by the burning heat of inner pain -- he must find this fester before he can inject bile and venom into the open wound.

With him Lymon brings his lopsided suitcase and all the tools of "Black Magic" to stain and blacken any human soul or living thing. "Benign Magic" is the only blocking force in his path, but very few are powerful enough with magic to oppose Cousin Lymon. Amelia Evans was perhaps one of the few who ever had such power. Lymon in the course of his travels hunted down this source of goodness -- Amelia had to be converted or destroyed by the Anti-Christ.

Lymon found Amelia in a small town of pale faces, deadened minds, hot dust, and bug infested swamp. Amelia was the spirit of the town; everybody else was a grey shadow of indirect passions of love and hatred, passions as temporal as the time of day....

Amelia yearned to love and wanted to be loved, yet she distrusted everyone. She was tormented by her desire to love and the subconscious will to remain sexless and pure. Her magical powers were rooted in a subconscious battle to fight the shroud of evil draped over the vile snake...

"Black Magic" began to destroy Amelia. She was confused, confused by the affection Cousin Lymon showed for the one she hated. A fight to the destruction of one pain or the other, love or hatred, was the only answer. Amelia and Marvin Macy were drawn into battle by the will of the Devil, the curse of hatred. Amelia's divine strength, when pitched against Marvin Macy, gave her the power to pin him in a choke-hold death grip, but the son of

Satan at this climax threw himself into Amelia, dug his venom filled claws into her unprotected back and hanging breasts, tearing her apart, shaping her into a gnarled figure with a spirit overcome by hatred, betrayal and despair.

10) Assignment: Make a statement that will shock Jack, Zeese, your classmates or your mother.

Mother, I don't know you anymore...... It's not the greying hair or the ageing face - no, it's not your age but mine that has made all the difference. I have changed. I know that now.

For so long - I have been away from that happy face of yours and the caring hands that used to provide all that I could want, the hands that once fed me, washed, and clothed me. You were everything to me then for you loved me as you always will. And I love you too, Mother, but the bosom that fed me cannot keep me a child forever. I have already grown out of your arms and left you in my search to find out how it is to live without your every moment's care.

But, mother, even when I left our home, I felt nothing but nostalgia for those years with you, those years of innocent childhood. You don't know how much my life has changed, how time has passed even since I dreamed of being a child once again. Now decisions are all mine. I have to work, think, plan for myself. But you -- you will never change. You wait still hoping to hold a child in your arms.

Mother I feel old -- I don't know you anymore.

ADDITIONAL SELECTED ASSIGNMENTS

Assignment: Write a paragraph that would shock your mother, Zeese and Jack, or your classmates.

When you came up the stairs at the head, with the rest of the Voice Project behind you I felt that it must be the end. It had rained all day and the light in that early afternoon was cold and clear. You had been to your last department meeting where you made literary jokes and had a good time eating out at the restaurant. When I walked up to you, that is when I felt I could have killed you. I could see that there was more than humor in your eyes, more a look of finality. Can I see you fighting for the last bits or the final shelter? It was far easier and more noble to see you at the bottom of that long staircase, sprawled on your back, your eyes revolving and bloody, looking up, once more at me, before I was buried in the crowd and you in your dreams.

--Chuck Fulkerson

I have come to the conclusion that nothing I think would shock anyone. I considered shocking my parents by telling them that they know little of me; but that would hardly surprise them. I could hurt them but I love them too much to carry that out very convincingly. I could tell Jack and Zeese that what they are doing is quite futile, few people are going to bother to read their books; their visions will sit on bookstore shelves and if they live those visions, then how many people will ever know them? I could present an expose to the group, but I have little to reveal. I am not a part-time prostitute, nor do I dream of strangling or eating any one of them. I could tell them that I do not like them very much--they are insensitive, yawning, giggling lumps--but I have contributed little to correct that image. Besides, I am quite sure that they are not overcome by love for me. I do not shock. I am shocked, but to shock would be to repeat that which shocked me--and half the time I do not believe that. The only thing that shocks me is the realization that there is no hope; that nothing matters. The war will last for twenty years, God is dead, love is rare, and no one cares. I live because I am afraid to die. We continue because each man thinks he can overcome. He can't. And if he does it is in such an insignificant way that few know or are made happier by his achievement. We gain enlightenment on the war--then what? No action possible. We can send CARE boxes but we tear one another up at home with petty jealousies and barbs. We work for understanding, but there is no end to misunderstanding. We help ourselves and others--so then what? We can raise more children to go to war and make the effort--anthropologically, everything is relative. So I'll help the Mexican Americans, but little children are sleeping on bare tables in big hollow rooms in Chicago's mental hospital--whimpering, shivering, wetting. The women who might comfort them are going door to door for tuberculosis, and hurrying home to check the roast for their children's supper--the children are imprinted with their parents' values. Few will escape. Summerhill exists; but only one Summerhill. Others have failed. Freedom is called license; murder necessary measures. The hippies have found love. But they laugh at crew cuts. Churches are filled with bleating dutiful Christians who will visit our cold stubbly gravestones and run back to the car because it is raining and they haven't brought umbrellas. And we are left in the rain. Cold wet shuddering gray rain. Nature is indifferent. The cold impersonal voice of history will swallow us all and digest us to nothing.

So I will rage against the woes of Mankind. But raging is standing beside an insurmountable stone wall and screaming until you collapse.

--Kim Dunster

Assignment: Write a real autobiography and an imagined autobiography.

My mother tells me that she did not return to work until I was three, but since my very first memory is of an insidiously coiled yellow garden snake in the yard of my babysitters', let us say that my mother has always worked, and here is a good half of the trouble. Not only has she always worked, but she has always been a Pioneer Woman. It is not important for you to know exactly what Pioneer Women do, only that they are an Organization and my mother is a Leader....

My mother has always worked in part because we are poor enough to absolutely require it, and also, I suspect, because of the assertiveness of her personality which the leadership of five hundred women alone can not satisfy. She speaks often and very successfully in public, uses no notes, and has splendid diction. Privately, she is never at a loss for words and has charmed my schoolteachers and principals with her intelligent conversation for years. She will be happy to take charge of both sides of a dialogue if you seem unlikely to resist. The final authority in our family rests, with tacit certainty, upon her shoulders. She is a minor wonder to our community for sheer accomplishment and efficiency. A favorite expression of hers is, "I must be made of iron."

So as I look back now, I see how I have attempted, and not without a good measure of success, to be the sort of woman that my mother is. For one thing, I have better enunciation than anyone I know, ever since the fourth grade music teacher who taught me the word, although I probably acquired the technique from my mother before I could even speak. She and I often have arguments over the pronunciation of words. Both of us are also excellent spellers. But more directly, I have an uncurbable tendency to dominate and have shown real aptitude in creating positions from which I could do it....

...The trouble which I speak of is my capacity to extend my manner to the border of arrogance. I brought home an unsatisfactory mark in physical education in the tenth grade, and that is when my mother first introduced the word into the family pool, accusing me of that very sin towards the gym teacher. The word caught on and she just made extensive use of it during my first vacation home from college. I have never liked the word and cried bitterly when she first used it against me, but it will serve well enough for now....

It should be obvious by now that I had the singular pleasure of being a child prodigy. Perhaps the word prodigy is misleading. I was no infant virtuoso or Einstein in swaddling cloth, but just a general prodigy whose I.Q. is excitedly suspected to hover in the rarified Olympian sky of genius ratings, a prodigiosity that one grows out of like babyfat. With my parents' encouragement I managed to hold onto the vestiges of this so successfully that I was in high school before a boy felt sufficiently unthreatened to consider me a girl.

My mother's example and my own glittering childhood have shaped for me a personality which moves some to admiration and others to avoidance, but this latter I cannot stand. Unfortunately, I did not inherit my mother's metallic cast, despite the sometimes brassy ring of my voice. I cry far too often; the tears would simply rust the works, for my insides are not made of iron but of fresh firm peaches with hard pits and softer insides which feel every bite.

--Shelley Surpin

(Imagined autobiography)

A Little About Me

Mrs. Ashley says I am the best girl she has had since her Lottie died twelve years ago. I am always very careful never to break anything in her big beautiful house....

The rooms are filled with vases and crystal from all over the world... When I dust I make sure to set the vases on the rug on the other end of the room so I won't hit them with my elbow by accident. I take good care of the furniture, too, which is very expensive....

My father was a tailor and he loved to do close detailed work that other tailors tried to bluff over. My mother always worried about his eyes, but he just gently ignored her. You might think I get my conscientiousness from him, but that is not true. Before the accident I wasn't this way at all....

And I loved my brother more than anything. Never for a moment did any other kind of thought pass through my silly head about him. When I was eighteen, he was ten, and already beautiful, but I wasn't jealous, not even when he was born and everyone made such a fuss. He had blonde hair tangled with dark and I could see he would be a brunette before long....

That day it was Valentine's Day and I had just come home from high school and was leaning out the window of our third story apartment. It was an ugly brick building that Mother tried to brighten up with flowers, but she shouldn't have even tried. She was going against the character of the building and it was bound to turn out bad. One of my arms rested on the sill and the other held behind my back a red heart-shaped balloon filled with water....

"Michael!" I shouted. "Come here!"

"What do you want?" he screamed back, tossing his blonde head from side to side.

"Come see," I said to tease him. "I have something for you."

If only he would have waited and not told Mimi that he'd be right back, things might have been different. Maybe only a few minutes would have changed everything. He was under the window already, though, when I began to bring my hidden arm forward to hit him soundly with the water balloon. But then my other elbow, the left elbow, slipped and pushed off the flower pot. I can still hear the whistling flight and the crash and the pieces flying up in his face, not like the flying flowerpots in cartoons we used to watch together. My mother started screaming wildly for the doctors when I told her quietly what happened. I promised never to do it again, and no one can call me a liar. Mrs. Ashley even trusts me alone in the house.

Once, just once, on a very cold day, I wanted to smash a plate but I knew I shouldn't and I didn't. No one can call me a liar.

--Shelley Surpin

Assignment: Write a piece insulting your instructor. (Mark Mirsky assigned this topic after his class had discussed curses and invective, as described in "The Classroom Experience," class of January 12. A companion exercise was to write a piece in praise of him; an example of a student's response to that exercise follows also.)

Mr. Mirsky, I wish you would dry up and blow away. Come to think of it, it would be rather amusing to see your chubby little frame wither and float away like a forlorn tumbleweed. I suppose you think you are very "with it" with your unkempt hair, insulting classroom manner, and your motorcycle crash helmet (you on a motorcycle? Ha!). It is a manifestation of a typical phenomenon in our modern society--the teacher who attempts to gain the favor of his class by adopting what he thinks are some of its habits. Your pitiful effort comes off as a total failure. What we see under this pathetic shell is the prototype of the typical young New York Jewish "intellectual"---a muddled young man trapped by his own background and trying to fight his way out of it by adopting a few superficial touches of the "angry young man." What you don't realize is that in order to gain stature you must think of some original approach to teaching, not this half-assed sort of unorthodoxy for unorthodoxy's sake. If you really have any talent, it's too bad to see you wasting it like this. I could almost feel sorry for you, except for your incredible arrogance, which I find most repulsive. You will get a few more chances to redeem yourself as the quarter progresses, but I think I can safely say, without contradiction from any of my classmates, that your choice was easily the worst the Voice Project made in the field of instructors. In fact, I dread having to be taught by you for the remainder of the year. You are the sort who will feel the most satisfaction when he has earned the hate of the entire class. If my diagnosis is right, you should be feeling very satisfied by now, for everyone I have talked to agrees that you are the worst teacher they have encountered at any level of their education. It's sad, really, because I did want to learn something this year, and I basked in the false hope that by taking Voice Project, I might be exposed to some decent teachers.

--Mark Abel

mr. mirsky im sorry i insulted
you in my last paper i didnt really
mean it youre really a swell guy after
all the only thing is after the first
class i was very m d e about what i should
u d l d
think about you i i was con fused i was con
fronted by an unknown quan and i reacted chil
tity
dishly now ive seen the light

markmi
r r
s s
k k
y y
mark
mi
its truly the light of knowledge ive come to
realize that your unorthodox manner is merel
y a guise a clever little move to entice the
students into expressing their true feelings
its its wonderful i feel as if im part of a
great new ard in education im awed to
w
r
o
leap f
say the least you will truly lead us out of
the darkness go forward o pioneer we shall
follow
(here follows a paean to the virtues
of following the teachings of mark
mirsky)

****

a leaf floating down from the warm branches
of early autumn, turning and twisting its
way through the dusty air, lands on the
granite face of a boulder, the breeze soons picks
it up and deposits it in a pool hollowed out
from the stream bank, the leaf swirls gently
around in the eddies and catches the green
current, this is the beginning.
--Mark Abel

Assignment: Write a curse. (Preparation for this assignment was general discussion of curses and invective and reading of curses in King Lear and Leviticus. See "The Classroom Experience," class of January 19.)

The kahuna thundered: "Keoki Hanahaole, you have broken the taboo and the gods are angry. Your house will blow to shreds with the next wind from

the pali and Pele, goddess of fire, will turn your taro patch to ashes. Your nets will bring you nothing but sea-slugs and blow-fish and Manu, god of the waters, will destroy your canoe. Your children will die screaming with burning sores and your wife will give birth to a filthy puaa. You are doomed, Keoki Hanahaole, and your tears will water the land until the gods are satisfied."

--Bobbie Conlan

May your mind slowly weaken
Your senses fail
Your understanding gradually grow dim
Your creativity and emotions shrivel away
May every quickening of thought and feeling
flicker and grow old
Until your precious humanness is numb
And the single faculty surviving
In your blackened but still waking consciousness
Is the full realization
Of your loss.

--Ann West

May you flunk out of college, not get a job, marry a shrew who spends all your money, get sent to Viet Nam, lose both your arms, return to an unfaithful wife, find your kids have grown to be monsters, contract tuberculosis, die in a poor house, have your corpse mutilated by experiments, and end up in Hell anyway.

--Margaret McDaughey

Assignment: Write a scene between a domineering wife and a hen-pecked husband.

Good Morning

He lay in bed, tensely trying to be asleep, listening to the footsteps approach the bedroom, hearing the words before they were spoken.

"Hey, Pop, it's 6:35 and Mom said you were supposed to get up at 6:30." The voice paused, waiting for a reply. "Hey, Pop---"

He turned over a bit to show he was awake. The footsteps retreated....

"Pop, it's fifteen of seven and your eggs are getting cold. Mom said I had to get you up."

"I know, I'm coming," he said, turning over again....the bed was getting warm again when suddenly he heard footsteps and quickly pulled himself up to sit on the edge of the bed. They passed in silence. He put on his cold slippers and fumbled in the closet for his bathrobe.

"Well, well...and how are you this morning?" he asked, entering the kitchen....

"Fine. Your eggs are frozen," his daughter replied. He sat down at the only place set and looked at the eggs. One was curiously half-scrambled with flecks of burned bacon in it, while the other was partly folded over on itself and the first. However, he knew from experience that they were fried, over easy. They rested with a dark brown stick of bacon in a pool of congealing grease on the plate. He looked at the breakfast sleepily and tried to think what was missing. The coffee. She was gone, so he slowly got up and went to the stove with his cup. He had started to pour when she returned.

"You can get your own coffee," she said. "I'm late because I had to make it this morning. Mom said you were supposed to if you got up in time, but you didn't so I went ahead and tried."

He stopped pouring at half a cup and went to sit down again. There wasn't any cream or sugar, so he got up, got it and sat down again. He took his little radio out of his bathrobe pocket and ate a bit of eggs. They weren't salted or peppered. He put the fork down and thought about going to get the salt and pepper, as the announcer began telling him about his local Texaco dealer, the man with the smile.

When his daughter came past again, he asked, "Do we have any salt or pepper?"

"Of course we do! Oh all right, I'll get it for you. Here's your toast, too. Why don't you ever fix the toaster? Mom said she's getting sick and tired of every other piece of toast getting burned."

"I did, but you just have to be careful when you use it to ---"

"Stand over it and pop it up before it burns. Well, I don't have time and neither does Mom."

"Besides, these aren't really burned. They're just pretty brown. Now when I was a kid, we used to be glad to get --"

"Be sure and eat both of them too, because Mom said you were supposed to have two pieces. Every single day you leave one and I have to throw it out -- just think of how many loaves of bread that is in a year!"

"But I only want one--"

Well, you and Mom better get together then because I'm just following orders. I've gotta go now. Mom said you have to give me a dollar for lunch."

"Uh,huh. It's in my room."

"And don't forget to take your lunch and eat all of it. You never eat the fruit, and it's good for you Mom says."

"Uh-huh."

"Don't forget to pick me up after school."

"Uh-huh."

"And have a good day at work. Bye."

"Uh-huh." He continued eating his salted and peppered eggs, stared at the tablecloth, and listened to the weather report: sunny, high of 70. It wouldn't be too bad a day. After all, his coffee was still warm.

--Anne Eggebroten

IN-CLASS WRITING

Voice Project students often did in-class writing based on a variety of subjects. They were given a tape to listen to or a written passage--sometimes even a photograph--to respond to and then asked to write for fifteen or twenty minutes. Generally, teachers wrote along with their students. The responses were then read aloud to the class and discussed in terms of acuity of perception, comprehension of the material, rhythm, diction, and voice. Some energized discussions resulted, and we found it a good way to get the students involved in the material of the course. The pieces included here are a few examples of work from in-class writing sessions; they are not representative of the year's in-class writing, but are intended to give an idea of this approach to writing.

Responses to a taped reading by Katherine Anne Porter of the end of "The Downward Path to Wisdom." (See "The Classroom Experience," class of October 3.

He slept, warm and secure, anticipating the yellow desks and wax crayons that would be his in the morning. He was jarred from his dreams by the sudden presence of his mother at his side, hushed and cool, troubled and urgent. Uncle David, large and abrupt, disturbed him further.

He was pulled into the gray, cold half-light, into the cool damp smell of upholstery. He sang secretly, rocking, a happy cradle song, a bit of warmth and love in the grayness of uncertainty and hate.

--Kim Dunster

The voice coming from the tape recorder sounds faintly like that of a Negress--the slight slurring, the emphasis on the last syllable bring to my mind a picture of a rather plump Negro, in a house dress, reading to a child on her lap--one arm holding the child the other holding an extended book--and I really don't know why. The child--whom the story is about is experienced--the horrid feeling of being awakened--and then riding in a car that jolts one so that it is almost nauseating--To make the whole feeling worse the child does not want to ride in the car--to see his father and consequently "hates" everyone. I find it difficult to express the precise emotions--the jumbled state of semi-consciousness and the inability to fully comprehend a child's experiences when dealing with an adult in authority -- and one who has the insensitivity to put a hand over a child's mouth.

--Helene Zimnicki

Responses to a passage from Faulkner's "Spotted Horses" in which the branches of a pear tree were compared to the hair of a drowned woman.

What would the sleep of a drowned woman be like? Would there be total darkness, unbroken by the smallest beams of light. Maybe there would be an all enveloping transluscence, endless and eternal. The senses would sleep and yet, somehow, there would be an awareness; an awareness of the helplessness and complete isolation that the woman found herself in. The helplessness wouldn't be based upon despair for she would be beyond despair, indeed, beyond all the passions and desires of the now living world. Despair, sorrow, pain, joy, excitement, all would be foreign to the drowned woman. Reality, for her would consist of the awareness that no longer would she be able to experience all the things that life is composed of.

Mrs. Armstid was a drowned woman.

--Paul Raymore

Faulkner, at times, I dislike intensely. This is one of these times. Faulkner seems to have a morbid preoccupation with death. Interrelated with this necrophilia is his sentimental nostalgia for the past. At times he carries the entire thing too far. I get a little bit tired of a passage which compares frosty pear trees to a drowned woman. There is something too forced about making a white frosty tree in bloom (enough leaves and blossoms to easily conceal individual, motionless, perpendicular, horizontal twigs, branches, limbs, and bows) to the upstreaming (how can a woman's hair be upstreaming if she's on a tired and motionless floor) hair of a drowned woman. I had enough.

--Chuck Fulkerson

The plum trees waiting by the porch, gnarled, luminous touches of leaves waiting the darkness not yet day. The soft misty summer moonlight and the pink neon cross, softening, glowing, Heidi and the grandfather, castles somewhere. Sitting on the cool smooth wood of the porch, pricking faces in the hard green plums. No wondering, too young, but believing now is real, come true no growing just being, believing Old, some say dying. Ole Hansen, humming down the middle of the street, baggy pants, clutching the bottle under his arm; does he know? Does he believe?

--Kim Dunster

Response to a taped composition of sounds: Rain, thunder, footsteps on pavement, a subway, a cigarette lighter, a cocktail party, a dripping faucet.

The rain had been falling for two days on the soggy ground. The water streamed down the dark green support which in past days before the rain had been dry and rough now the rain made it cold and slippery to touch. Trucks were all that used the highway now they came up upon you much faster than the trains and then they were gone, leaving a spray of water behind them. The train was coming, you could hear it for a long way off.

The water ran down the pipe and into a large pool below the concrete abutment then it ran out at the end of the pool and into the dark purplish wet bushes below the railroad embankment. Another truck went by above but now the train covered up the noise of the trucks. It glided in on the rails which were covered with water.

The lights were too much for my eyes after the bleak world underneath

this highway bridge. I found a corner away from the people by myself, fell asleep, we were in the city shortly afterward.

I got out quickly and walking down Fifth Avenue until I found the first mailbox I dropped the note in, it would be found in the morning. The small briefcase took on a new importance now that the note was safe in the mailbox.

I got to the airport, people all around oblivious, took my briefcase, got on the plane with no questions. It was still raining but I didn't care; it was all right now.

--Chuck Fulkerson

Awakening to the sounds, I am yet secure in my sleepiness. Every sound is loud--and yet in a way distant and soft. The opened train window suddenly chills me, I feel outraged that it should be left open to expose me to the cold rain. People around are slamming the windows shut but they themselves do not shut. The noise, rumbling like a berserk coctail party, fades away as the very eyelids droop.

In the train car, the faucet drips stupidly as if it was waiting for one such as I to shut off. Not out of malice but more from frustration; I will leave a tiny stream flowing when I stumble back to my seat.

A dolt opens the window again and the cold rain strikes the ground, the roof, my face. Idiots--they are all idiots--but not I, for when I step off the train I will not scurry and shriek for shelter. My bare head will feel the cold rain and then I can blame no one for leaving the window open.

I am cold, I am stupid. There is no reason on earth to walk in the stupid, cold rain. Even the poorest seek shelter when it rains but I must show my dignity, my indifference to the water that trickles down my neck to give me a chill that will give me a cold that will make me feel like a fool. But it is too late and I am free--no use thinking about it.

Thoroughly wet now, I am an object of attention. People either pity me or think I am stupid. But one thing makes me feel better--they are more stupid than I--except the rain. It's washing the mud down the street, past my feet--and some of that mud belongs to me. I want it. It belongs to me. It came from my back and my body.

--Douglas Tom

In the beginning there is only blackness and wetness and rumbling and form comes as a dark night, and a stormy seashore, and thunder. As the cars become accustomed to the sound, a railroad track separates itself from the craggy landscape. Cattle cars thunder then rumble down the track. Humans rumble within the cars against the walls. People pounding on wooden doors mix with ocean pounding rocky shores. Rain pelts everything--still planes zoom overhead.

Sentries march back and forth, perpendicular to the path of the train, and are passed by it. Black automobiles and horse-drawn carts speed along the road which runs parallel to the tracks. The galloping horse towing a cart with produce into the small town to the stockyards, which are in chaos as the human-laden cars pull into the town, braking for a short break for the engineer who has had a difficult time in the storm, with a screech.

At the camp, there are quiet men, waiting, lighting cigarettes as the water drips off the concrete buildings, waiting for the next trainload.

--Shelley Surpin

Early morning. The El running outside above the street. Bacon sizzling on the stove--a small gas stove in a very small kitchen with slippery pale blue linoleum and one small window filtering the morning a wet fritty city gray.

She puts her uncomfortable spiked heels on last and goes out into the city--moving, clicking determinately, sophisticatedly past small bursts of laughing, nudging, hurrying people. She ignores them and strides into the station where she has trouble with the gate. It is large and dim and there are echoes--commuters' morning rush hour and a calm, deep voice over the public address guides and directs those who care to listen. Few do.

The bus pulls away farther into the city. She stands, swaying, gripping the strap, checking her hair in the mirror and reading the Juicy Fruit ads. There are other people--many people--there always are many people--but she is very alone.

More clicking--determined, refusing to look alone rather older than years, independent, self-reliant. A door--a revolving door--and the voices of a large, hushed noisy restaurant. (cafeteria)

She hangs her coat on the peg, unfolds her apron, fastens the hairnet with pins clenched in her lips and starts the coffee and bacon for the other people's breakfasts.

--Kim Dunster

Responses to a passage from Loren Eisely's The Firmament of Time, recounting an anecdote in which one of the creators of the atom bomb replaces a turtle he had taken up because he had "tampered enough with the universe."

There is something both frightening and pathetic about the scientist's gesture for me. Replacing a tortoise is a small mercy, the kind of thing men are often good at, and at this moment, the moment when the scientist is standing with the small, hard shell in his hand, I see him not a representative of growing responsibility about the university, but as a little man doling out justice in a universe which can transcend -- has transcended -- even his power to tamper.

--Zeese Papanikolas

I like the idea of this piece because of the strength and proverbial quality of its symbolism, its revelation of power and compassion. The story is almost Biblical in its prophetic-like approach in expressing a seemingly profound idea. The idea is sharp and piercing to me and that's its total effect. Otherwise the story is an imagination, a figment of emotion and distorted reality.

If you pass through the pages of the Bible you will find prophets like the author of this piece, concerned for the world, the way it should be, and pained by the lack of human compassion and man's unrestrained aspirations for power.

--Jim Kilgore

The depth at which this episode struck me is due in large part to my affection and admiration of the narrator. In the first half of the story his voice is strongly present, evincing a steady sincerity, simplicity and honesty. His reluctance to reveal the scientist's name shows a kind respectfulness. He is not trying to impress the reader with a private peek into a public figure's life. The neatness and clarity of his style and vocabulary completed the pleasant impression.

Then, somewhere within the second paragraph, the great scientist begins to take over the stage, although the narrator is always just in the wings.

The two seem to flow into each other and the scientist shares all the sincerity and simplicity of the teller of the story.

With these sympathies, the final reflection, which might seem trite, must strike deeply. The solemnity of that statement from another less respected might ring slightly ridiculously, but the initial empathy built up by the narrator and transferred to the physicist makes that impossible for me.

--Shelley Surpin

I have mixed feelings about this anecdote, perhaps because of our present intensified awareness of potential atomic destruction, perhaps because within the past year I have come to know a few physicists, perhaps because of something in the nature of the account itself. The thought of tampering with nature is profound. And yet the physicist's own self-realization does not appear to be profound, though I am perhaps asking too much. After witnessing the first experimental atomic blast, Oppenheimer, while exploring the ruined terrain where the blast occurred, discovered a turtle on its back and stooped and turned it right side up. Is this gesture more or less profound than that in the anecdote in question? I do not really know. I suppose the fact of the matter is that the results of the two gestures remain unimportant, in terms of the course of atomic destruction. To return a tortoise to the place it was found or to remove a turtle from an unnatural position--these acts may be seen as sentimental or as small and, hence, immensely pathetic. For me the paradox is that the image of the upset turtle creates with terrible power the actual nature of the atomic blast. It is with the blast itself--and the unreal actuality of all involved in it--that we must reckon.

--Jim Hawkes

REVISIONS

This section illustrates some of the ways we directed our students toward revision. We relied mainly upon in-class criticism by fellow students (See "The Classroom Experience," classes of May 8 - 18.); the tape-recorded "talking-out" of materials in a paper; and of course, teachers' written comments. We were particularly interested in exploring ways the tape recorder could be used to help the student in revision and found it most useful in leading him to discover new materials and attitudes as he "talked-out" experiences he had written about. The following papers of Peter Moynahan and Marjorie Young illustrate this use of the tape recorder.

1) Revision on the basis of tape-recorded "talking out."

Pete Moynahan wrote a short paragraph about Hawaii in his first assignment (A childhood recollection) in which he tried to compare the tempo of island life to the motion of the sea. He failed to express his feeling or to describe the experience adequately because of the lack of concrete detail in his writing.

> The sea in its motion in Hawaii greatly resembles the atmosphere of the land most of the time. Like the slow-moving, easy tempo of the life on land, the sea laps and splashes casually on the beaches. At times on both land and sea you feel that everything is just on the verge of stopping altogether, and there are barely ripples on the beaches, as the sea seems ready to become one big swimming pool.
>
> --Pete Moynahan

Jack had him sit down with a tape recorder during a conference, and they talked the material out together, Pete describing what he remembered and Jack asking him questions:

> PETE: Where I live, sixty per cent of the time or more, there's always a strong wind, really strong, maybe between twenty and thirty-five knots all the time blowing every day. The trees are all bent in one direction and the waves -- the wind is so strong that instead of bringing them towards the beach, sometimes it pushes them along it -- along with the wind. You know, it's always choppy looking out on the ocean. And even though it's sunny, it's not a light blue; it's a dark blue ocean when the wind is like that. And then it's choppy. Then there'll be a day when the wind will just be -- everything will be calm. And it'll be hot because there's no wind. It'll be still, and you can hear all around. And the ocean is just calm. I mean, instead of surging up and down on the beach and crashing around and coming over the reefs, it's just still. Right on the beach, it's lapping, little waves breaking, really small, five or six inches, and just a little bit of movement. But for the main part, everything's just still. And it's very similar on the land -- it's hot like that. I mean, you just have the feeling you want to lie down and just go to sleep, drop off or get into some shade of something. And it's reflected everywhere -- the way everyone works,

there's not much air conditioning. That day is sort of a waste because everyone just sort of sits around melting -- and you can get a feeling after you've lived in it long enough: "Boy, here we go -- time to go back inside and forget or something."

JACK: You talked about sounds, you can hear everything. Is there anything in what you can hear that relates to this deadness, this stillness?

PETE: Well, when the wind's blowing, there's a whistling by your ear. I mean, there's sort of a constant roar in the background. You don't have to speak up over the wind to be heard or anything like that. It's there. All the small sounds are just dead sounds. You notice when the wind isn't blowing -- if there's a breeze and the tree moves, it creaks, and the branches scrape and things like that, the branches snap. You can hear that when it's calm. When it's blowing the branch could fall off and you probably wouldn't even hear it. It's odd when it's calm because if there's a bird, it chirps or it tweets. It really stands out -- or a dog barks. Or if somebody slams a door of the car down the block you can hear it.

JACK: What does this have to do with the ocean and its sounds when the wind is not blowing?

PETE: To me it's all one feeling. All these things add up to, "Well, it's calm today," or "It's gonna be just dead today."

JACK: Are there sounds of the sea that are dead? Or the kind that you can hear because it's dead?

PETE: Well, on a calm day, the sound is right at the water's edge where the waves just sort of break up and lap -- I guess you couldn't say slapping, I guess the word is "lap" -- splashing around just a little bit. When it's rough, when it's windy the sound is different -- not lapping. You're close to the water where it's breaking -- it's a pounding when it hits the beach, as it breaks it's a kind of roaring. As the water tears away from itself, falls over, there's a sound to that, too, maybe an atoll--- there's a difference in the sound.

The tape was then transcribed and a copy of the transcription given to Pete to compare to his written piece. In talking out this material, he had found several specific details that helped to describe his experience, and these were captured in the transcript. Furthermore, he discovered that what he wanted to write about was not what could be described as "easy tempo"; "easy tempo" was out of a guidebook and not the subject he cared about at all. By listening to his recorded voice he could begin to hear at least an aspect of this subject -- a deeply serious, even mordant, quality evoked by recollections of Hawaii -- and could begin to imitate these intonations and rhythms in his written prose.

2) Revision on the basis of the tape recorder and teacher comments.

Marjorie Young joined the Voice Project at the beginning of the second quarter, and the first paper she wrote was an attempt to recount an experience of "communion" with a boy who read his poems about Germany in a student coffee house. Jack had her talk her experience into a tape recorder and make a transcription of the tape, which she turned in to him with the paper. He commented on both of these, and she continued to work with the same material, writing papers and using the tape recorder to talk about her experiences. She and her roommate discussed her entire summer in Germany, and she made a transcript of that discussion, which she turned into Jack for comments (a portion of that dialogue is included here). Finally, she wrote a version of her feelings about her German summer, which was quite successful, and Jack commented on it:

Original written version.

> ... I began to tremble slightly and I felt tears rolling down my cheeks. After that introduction I could hardly even listen to the poem. I felt a bond between us, even though he wasn't aware of it. I spent last summer living with a family in Germany. His feelings about his experience were so very like my own. He had expressed them in a way in which I had never been able to before. We shared a feeling. He had given me something; perhaps it was simply the knowledge that someone else had experienced and felt what I had experienced and felt. I had told people about my summer before and they had listened politely. But I always knew that no matter how much I said, they could not possibly feel the experience.
>
> This boy felt the same way about the difficulty of communicating a feeling. Once, in between the readings of two poems, he remarked, "I'm not sure if I'm really communicating with anyone. These poems mean something to me, but I can't tell if my feelings can be transmitted to you through them."
>
> I wanted desperately to tell him that he had reached at least one person. I wanted to share my feelings with him, as he had shared his with me. I thought about the courage it must take to read your personal poetry to a group of strangers and then to wonder if you were being understood by anyone....
>
> --Marjorie Young

Transcript of tape-recorded "talking out" or original version.

> ...I knew that he had felt something very deeply there and had shared his feeling now and I shared it, too. I really shared that feeling with him and then he went on to read his poetry and I hardly even listened...I could hardly listen because I was so moved by the opening words, and I began to

tremble and I felt tears rolling down my cheeks, I was very moved. So he read his poetry, and I remember that between two poems he stopped and he looked out in the audience and he said, "I really don't know if I'm communicating with anybody. These poems mean a lot to me. But I really can't tell if anyone else can understand 'em or anything." He seemed to be searching for some kind of assurance that he was getting through. I was sitting at the back of the room; I smiled, but I'm sure he couldn't see. Then he sat down and another boy got up, but I kept watching him. He was still sort of looking out into the audience. In a few minutes he just got up and walked out. I got up from my chair and walked over to the door also, but I had been sitting at the back of the room and had to wade through a lot of chairs to get to the door. And so by the time I got there, he had disappeared. All I could see was rain and cold and I ran one direction and saw nothing and went the other direction and saw nothing and got lost in the maze around Wilbur -- it's like a maze -- and the rain kept coming down and I was cold and lonely and I wanted to find him. I wanted to let him know that he had reached someone, that I had shared a feeling with him and I still couldn't find him, so I went home, to Branner, that is. I tried to explain the experience to other people, but they didn't seem to understand exactly how I had felt. ...

(Jack's comments on original and spoken versions:

As for your written treatment of the poetry reading, I confess that I found it difficult to believe the heavy emotional burden you describe. You include nothing concrete, you see, nothing personal (about Germany, about possible things the poem made you think of) to serve as a basis for feeling. Now your spoken version of this material doesn't convey this darkness -- and frankly strikes me as much more true. In other words, the written version suggests excessive emotion; the spoken version is generally light, disengaged, comes closer to putting your reactions in proper emotional perspective. But taken together, these pieces make me think that you ought to consider the difference between "communion" and a kind of surface identification. And yet the written and spoken versions of the poetry experience do represent a valuable effort.

--J.H.)

Transcript of recorded dialogue and discussion about Germany with Helen Williams.

HELEN: Tell again about that night at the poetry reading, and why it made you feel so much.

MARJORIE: Well, I guess it was mostly a kind of identification. And a remembering. But I think it more than just a fond looking back at a memory. You know, it's more than just thinking about something pleasant that happened. It was pleasant, but there's a lot more to it, too. And thinking that perhaps someone else had had something even just a little bit like that. Just, just the fact that he had been to Germany and that some of what he said just sounded like what I had felt. I guess that's probably why I felt the way I did....

* * * * * * * * * * * * *

MARJORIE: I mean it's the people really that made the difference. I mean, my first experience in Europe was - oh it was nice, and we saw a lot of interesting things, but it --- there's just no comparison when you can live with a family and be a part of a family and you're in another culture, and you've left your own family, you've left your own country, you've left your own language and everything, and you're just stripped down to yourself and that's all. And you're just there and you've got to adapt. But it's the most wonderful feeling to feel yourself becoming part of another family.... Just so much happened -- or, not so much happens, but just thoughts and feelings and things that are really hard to pinpoint. And it just doesn't stop. I felt things happening when I was there. Now that I'm back and can look back on it all it takes a clearer shape and everything fits together better.

HELEN: Do you think that's different from the boy? Because remember his poem about how he felt that he hadn't done everything that he could when he was in Germany. Do you feel that way, too?

MARJORIE: I certainly do. I mean I did a lot, but there were times when I could have done more. Like, I didn't --- I never really got to know the Baron that well. He just was harder to get to know, but it wasn't all his fault really. And-- for awhile I didn't think he liked me.... And it was really hard, but then I found out that the way he treated me was the way he treated everybody.

* * * * * * * * * * * * * *

MARJORIE: ... She kept telling me that she was treating me like an adult.

That was another thing. I realized - wow - I'm not a child that you call "Du" to. I guess that was a big realization in itself, being considered an adult. And becoming an adult, that's kind a scary thing. I felt like I didn't want to grow up and yet I was - had to grow up and growing up was so beautiful really, but it was painful sometimes, too...

(Jack's comments:

You and Helen are both talking a borrowed or learned language. My own feeling is that it permits ease and allows for the expression of vague emotion, but isn't really adequate for these fine materials. Are there any changes in the sound of your voice on the tape? Perhaps now you should revise or write a portion of this dialogue, trying to imitate the sound of your voice itself. But let's talk for a moment first. Again, it's essential that you try to be concrete.

--J.H.)

Final revision.

A letter from the Baroness in my mailbox and it all comes back to me, flowing through me and warming me... the train ride to Essen - talking with people in the smoke-filled compartment, bumbling my German all over the place and laughing at myself and showing them the jokes at the end of the chapter in my German book, and all of us laughing and talking together, fearing that I had missed the train while I went to buy some flowers during the stopover in Koblenz, stepping off the train, clutching the now half-wilted flowers in one hand and my clumsy black-watch plaid suitcase with the big adhesive "Y" on it in the other,... watching the Baron wind most of the 90 clocks that all ticked and rung at different times, ... and one morning waking up and realizing that I'd been dreaming in German, the strain and loneliness of listening to an entire conversation and not understanding what is being said and feeling like a nuisance if I asked people to repeat, the frustration of not being able to express myself, the joy of getting to know the old man from Czechoslovakia and realizing that had I not been able to speak German, I could never have known him, crying myself to sleep at night and not being able to say why in any language and crying all the harder because I couldn't say why, ... cutting out faces of my German family from photos I took and pasting them in the guestbook around a little poem I wrote and leaving the guestbook open on the desk next to a rose as a surprise, and the little heart necklace Theoda gave me that belonged to her great-grandmother, and never wanting to say good-bye that chill morning as I stepped on the train and shook hands with everyone for one last time through the open train window just before the train pulled off, rubbing my eyes with my hands so the conductor wouldn't see I'd been crying when he came to punch my ticket...and realizing six months later more reasons why I didn't want to say good-bye that day, knowing that even if I go back it will never be quite the same, and wanting each moment to live forever and knowing the moments would live on in my mind and in theirs, and wondering how these moments were different to them and to me...

(Jack's comments:

Fine! You've done what you wanted to do, surely -- you'll see this by the end of the first page. I found myself resisting the catalogue of participial constructions. And yet the concrete materials are quite marvelous, and despite the problems of fragmentation the prose itself becomes Faulknerian in power, but also your own. The point is that you have expressed your feelings now, thanks to detail and expanded rhythms, and have done so without embarrassment. I read these pages with pleasure.

--J.H.)

3) Revision on the basis of teacher comments.

A Hebrew Lyric

(1)

"Bachama me-rosh ha-ilanot nistalka" -- "The sn departs from the tops of the trees," we sang into the thin, cool air high above the lake. Every year time took another drink of the green-black water at the bottom of this vast bowl formed by mountains. About seventy of us stood singing upon its rim.

We had scattered ourselves comfortably around and upon the boulders which in their huge grace seemed to come from another age, and although the road was close behind us, just beyond the last rise of trees, no sound of trucks could be heard on Sabbath Hill, only seventy voices now following this leader, now this one, then another, in wandering Hebrew melodies. It was Friday evening at camp and we had come to watch the sunset which would mark the beginning of Shabbat, the day of rest.

All afternoon, like every Friday afternoon, we spent washing the week's grime from ourselves and our camp. Shabbat greetings, written in leaves and twigs, bloomed from the dusty ground at the openings of tents. Girls wore skirts.

Singing and chattering, we had made our way through the knee-high meadow on a slight winding path, through the roughly made site used for Saturday night campfires, onto the dusty pathway called "Shveal Shabbat," past the rocks where the girls tanned themselves on Saturday to the vista from the top of Sabbath Hill. Just now the orange sun disappeared from sight. Happy cries and murmurs of "Shabbat Shalom! Shabbat Shalom! Sabbath Peace! Sabbath Greetings!" travelled among us as we began to climb down from our posts on the huge rocks. Smaller boys scurried from girl to girl, coupling their greetings with shy kisses, while some older boys laughed nervously and began to lead quickly down the path back to camp. Most of us followed more slowly, in a small procession of white shirts and clean faces, now beginning to sing, with the harmony, "Lo Yisa Goy El Goy Cherev -- Nation shall not lift up sword against nation. Neither will they learn war any more."

(2)

The Student Union clock said almost midnight when the folk dancing was over and I walked outside. It was a dark quiet Friday night in autumn and I knew that I could not go back to the dormitory yet. Folk dancing always reminded me of camp, memory after memory, linked arm-in-arm, circling rhythmically through my mind casting a spell of sweet loneliness. I had first learned to dance two years ago at camp on Friday nights, when the pebbled floor of the dining hall had borne our bare soles to an hour later than this one. That very floor must have laughed to see me clumsily copy the grace of the others, only on the fifteenth try to succeed and join them.

I put my hands in my pockets as I passed the library, and, feeling independent and nostalgic at the same time, I began to sing of roses and lovers in Hebrew. I sang not loudly but firmly and only when a drunken group of boys passed by did I pretend silence. I sang through all the low Hebrew love and evening songs in minor key that I know and found myself walking more and more slowly. My direction had changed somehow and pointed towards the now silent Inner Quadrangle. I remembered that it was Friday night, the beginning of Shabbat, and it hurt deliciously. Only the sound of my footsteps on the gravel could be heard among the empty stone buildings, and my voice in first "Lo Tisa Goy El Goy Cherev," and then "Hachama Me-rosh" and a swift progression of all Shabbat songs from all times to the swift progression of square white Friday evening tables bearing bottles of purple wine through my brain and the slow progression of my feet through the empty courtyard. As I approached the center of the yard, I concentrated hard upon the purple bottle and then the silver candlestick holders and the blue flames. I pressed my mind into a golden Shield of David. As my feet touched the metal star (five-pointed) which marked the center of the Quadrangle, I had become The Solitary Jew. I stood up straight and glared defiantly across at Memorial Church.

(3)

Market Street, San Francisco, was jammed with people, of whom The San Francisco Chronicle would later say, "Only one in four was over twenty-five." This was quite true of the student contingent of the Spring Mobilization Peace March, an assemblage which had just begun to move up overflowing streets after two hours of waiting in the drizzly morning. There was little talking and a feeble attempt at "We Shall Overcome." Most everyone was wet, but glad to be moving and anxious not to miss any important announcements. We began walking slowly at first, a dense bedraggled parade bearing posters and every imaginable kind of hat. The volume of the voices built up with the pace until the march was a maze of private conversations about a host of topics from the size of the Mobilization to the war in Vietnam, which seemed respectively to be the subjects most and least discussed.

Through the tangle of voice I had the strange sensation of being grabbed at by a familiar sound wave or pattern. At first I could not identify the sound at all, and then when I realized what I thought I had heard, I rejected it as an absurd projection of my mind. But as the song grew clearer and louder I could no longer deny its reality. I looked up from under my white wide-rimmed rainhat to see an open truck of children singing, "Lo Yisa Goy El Goy Cherev." The sign on the truck read, "Los Angeles Mittle Shul Sings for Peace."

I opened my mouth with joy and my voice met theirs above the din.

--Shelley Surpin

Revision of (3)

We stood very close together on the cold morning of the Spring Peace Mobilization march in San Francisco, so close that only now and then could I force my glance up through the black overlap of umbrellas to a gray bit of sky. Most of the time, though, I could only see the wet asphalt slosh passing past under my boots framed by the dripping eave of my white rainhat.

I heard a group which must have been very close by trying to start "We Shall Overcome," and I tried to sing too, but gave up from self-consciousness. Then they stopped also. Everyone around me was talking about the size of the march, the estimates of different newspapers, the radio prediction, the possibility of distortion, and only a little later when the drizzle stopped and the marchers spread out was I able to sort out the voices into five or six separate groups and be sure they had not all been talking together. But now I could see all the private arguments and discussions which had developed and which rose in volume as the march gained in speed. I walked along in silence, reading to myself the posters and banners which dotted the parade.

Then I began to become aware of a familiar sound. It crept very slowly into my thoughts of slogans and outlandish hats, like the tide which oozed up the sand, drowning your ankle just as you realized that your toes are wet. My whole attention was immersed in the sound before I could realize what it was, and then I tried to push back the wave. It couldn't be what I thought and yet the song grew louder and clearer. I looked up from under the white brim to see an open truck of children singing "Lo Yisa Goy El Goy Cherev." The sign on the truck read, "Los Angeles Mittle Shul Sings for Peace."

A little boy leaned over the railing of the truck and shouted to the bewildered marchers, "It's a Jewish song!" The prophecy of Isaiah was pouring into Market Street and nobody understood. I opened my mouth wide and sang the familiar words with the school-children, knowing for an instant without words that spears and guns were one and plowshares still meant peace. Feeling the strength of the ancient vision, I was proud. The little boy was still explaining over the side of the truck.

(Jack's comments:

The evocation of shyness at the end of (1), the quite marvelous epiphany in (2), the song the children sing at the end -- these moments are lovely and obviously relate to each other. However, my own feeling is that this ordered structure -- three separate "blocks" of experience -- may actually get in the way of your own overriding voice or consciousness or intelligence. I'd like to hear you throughout, hear your own memory playing back and forth over these recollections, and doing so in terms of a single idea or feeling. I think you'll notice too that your voice shifts here (in 3) from overly "literary" to merely spoken or journalistic. But the vision in (3) is, as I say, wonderfully moving and impressive. Let's go over these pages this week.

--J.H.)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

"A SKETCHY REPORT ON 'THE VOICE PROJECT' AT STANFORD

by
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Lured by the promise of an experimental Freshman English composition project at Stanford University, I asked permission of Don Fraser and Mrs. S. Clark, administrative assistant of the project, to observe and report on it in some way, especially if I found the project worthy of imitation, theft, or of stimulus toward a project at Foothill. In the last five months, I have read the project's brochures and articles on it in the Stanford Daily, I have visited two classrooms, eavesdropped on two student interviews with instructors, talked with two instructors on a formal interview basis, and talked with three other instructors on a more social basis, and spent several hours in the corridor of the project listening to the instructors commenting on each other's work, reading student writing, and incidentally, listening to students discussing their classes. Much later, I spoke briefly to the project director, Professor John Hawkes. On such a fragmentary and random basis, I decided I could not submit a real report, but I could discuss two topics relevant to the project, the theory and the classroom practice, and I could suggest what aspects of the program Foothill English teachers might be interested in.

The Voice Project is sponsored by the English department of Stanford, with Professor Albert Guerard, presently serving as director of Freshman Composition, as an enthusiastic supporter of the project. Last summer even before the project's initiation, Professor Guerard spoke of the project as "exciting," "experimental," and "wonderful." Professor Guerard's support is obviously important to the director of the project itself, Professor John Hawkes, who came from Brown University to join the English Department and run the Voice Project. Professor

Hawkes, an experimental writer of plays, articles, and four novels, had previously tried out some of his ideas on teaching writing while at Brown University, but he is now directing an entire project based on his ideas. To support the costs of this program, Professor Hawkes applied to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, submitting a proposal to stress new methods of teaching English composition based on using much oral, taped, and recorded material as the basis for writing, plus stimulating students to comment in class continually on the individual "voice" or personality of the writer being studied, plus sending students out into the community to teach those lessons they have just been taught. The Department granted funds for one year and requires Professor Hawkes to submit continual evaluations of the program and requests for further support.

The theory, or ideas behind the project, are available to anyone who wants to read them. To the funding agency, Professor Hawkes stressed the possibility of experimentation in teaching composition, the energizing of students in this program because of its personal attention to students, and the community service this program stimulates. He pointed to his past success with this theory on a smaller scale. The theory and the invitation to join the project were offered to schools in this area; several high schools joined, but I know definitely of only two, Ravenswood High School in East Palo Alto, and Cubberley High in Palo Alto. Of the elementary schools, I know only of De Anza School in Palo Alto. Professor Hawkes offered his Stanford students to teach a class occasionally for teachers, to tutor students on an individual basis, to take small groups from a larger class and work with these groups on special problems. He offered not only students to teach, but tape recorders, film strips, records, and various printed materials to support the lessons and to be left with the teacher for future class work. He claimed that what would make this project different from other writing class-service projects would be the wholehearted effort to concentrate on writing itself. He staffed the project with five professional writers as well-known as, for instance, himself, Leo Litwak, and Sylvia Berkman, William Alfred and with younger writers who have written only one or two published novels or volumes of short stories, such as Mark Mirsky, Steve Dixon, Jerome Charyn, and Clive Miller. (We can note that a conference at Berkeley on April 1, 1967, was devoted to the notion of having professional writers teach composition; Jerome Charyn spoke at one of these sessions.) In addition, Hawkes secured graduate students in English (creative writing) as assistants to these writers. He proposed to set up this "experiment" by asking for volunteers from entering Stanford freshmen, and from these volunteers, he selected those who fit the Stanford pattern best (i.e, sex ratio of 3 boys to 1 girl), and also fit the criterion of geographical representation, with a total of 100 being selected. Hawkes, his writer-teachers, and 100 students began in September, 1966, the first year of the "Voice Project."

THEORY ITSELF: The Voice Project arose out of a profound dissatisfaction with many of the ordinary teaching methods that seem to stress mechanics and techniques without noticing that what may come first is motivation to write well and honestly about what one knows or learns. The goals of the Voice Project seem to be: to examine first with the students their own writing, their words on a page, as compared with their own voices talking about the same material, or, talking about material they are very interested in, the notion being that students may sometimes perceive the barriers in their own writing style to their own honesty. Another goal seems to be to encourage students to write in their most effective style and tell their own truths about their own experiences, their reading, or assigned analyses about the works of writers. One of the means towards these goals seems to be urging students to help younger students (even children) to some realization of how real writers write -- out of commitment, honesty, and with practiced skills -- rescuing these students even earlier and encouraging them to be more effective and personal in their writing.

I soon discarded the theory itself as of major importance, pleasant and idealistic though it sounded, because the theory is not actually being tested by the Voice Project. For instance, because of the selection procedures, nobody can state definitely who could be taught by these methods: volunteers for a project are not representative students, a biased sex ratio is unrealistic and also may significantly influence classroom participation in ways not measurable on "writing scales," and geographical representation is not significant for city colleges, or Foothill, for that matter. The teaching staff, in general, seems to be composed of highly articulate, handsome, dynamic young men, some with a rapid pace in speaking and even in moving, which may also influence classroom participation in certain ways. This notion of teachers' personalities and styles is not being explored, although it might seem a good idea to do so, following the pioneering work Kurt Lewin did at Iowa State on the effects of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire teachers. As for the methods, listening to tapes of students' voices or the voices of people in the community (such as young children or old men recounting folk-lore), listening to records of poets reading their own works, analyzing styles of students and writers, and the like, nobody in the project is measuring writing on a standard scale before or after exposure to any of these methods. All that one instructor claimed is, "Well, their progress is not any worse than it would be in a standard class." When I asked, "How do you know?" he answered, "Well, I feel that's true. A teacher knows if a student is improving." Another instructor said, "They're making about as much progress as the usual class." "How do you know?" "Well, some are making negligible progress, but I can see that some are loosening up, enjoying writing more, writing fantastic amounts." In other words, these instructors are using our own types of evaluations, subjective, impressionistic, emotional, and even, unfortunately, defensive. One instructor, however, claims that many students are writing thousands of words voluntarily, and are becoming excited about writing. This struck me as an important piece of evidence, and one that should be followed up. Another instructor gave me a case history of one girl who improved her writing. Her first composition began with a statement that she was going to discuss "the members of the body." Her instructor probed with her what that phrase could possibly mean, and how did she arrive at writing it down; she claimed she meant "arms," "legs," and other parts of the body, and that she was taught it was more refined, more correct, "better" to write this way. When she was asked to rewrite, to listen to herself talking on tape, she began writing different kinds of compositions. Her last effort was a fine performance in which she described the work of a night-time waitress in a drive-in (her own part-time job.) In this work, she showed the difference between her own slangy, realistic thoughts, the careful bland diction she used to talk to her customers, and the varied accents and personalities of her customers. Her instructor claimed she had been taught to listen to people, and to herself, and that her skill as well as her perception improved during the course of that quarter.

As for the teaching service to the high schools or elementary schools, the instructors claim their students enjoy teaching writing and their students reinforce their own learning when they teach lessons on sounds, rhythms, emotional effects of words and phrases, denotation and connotation, etc. The instructors enjoy the interaction with the high schools and say they can discover writing talent, and stimulate those high-school students to improve their skills. I did not, for obvious reasons, call the English teachers in those schools, or the principals, for their evaluation of the program. I could point out, however, that none of the schools is dropping the program. The theory, in other words, has led to a program with a unique structure, but the theory is not being tested.

THE PRACTICE: In some ways, the project is a standard Freshman Composition course with three quarters of reading and composition on assigned topics. At the beginning of the first quarter, for instance, one class was reading Jerome Charyn's book of short stories and some Chekhov short stories and it was writing compositions and diaries on the themes and narration of those works. One class I visited was temporarily switching to radio material: Listening to Orson Welles' radio play on the invasion of earth by Mars. At the beginning of the second quarter, all the sections were reading Conrad's "The Secret Sharer," and they were writing on profound experiences that have continued to influence them. One assignment for one student diagnosed as "tight, cramped, dull in style," was to write on the one incident in his life when he learned how horrible, he, too, could be. His composition discussed an incident in his recent life when his mother asked him to spank his younger brother for her and he did, sadistically enjoying this pleasure. At the beginning of the third quarter, some sections were reading Mark Mirsky's novel, and some novels by Negro writers.

Almost everything else in the project is not standard, but novel, in fact, innovative. The professional writers who teach the classes are not ordinary instructors or T.A.s although several came from colleges like Wellesley or San Francisco State, and are experienced classroom teachers. They bring the added conviction of being writers discussing their methods, and they are teaching freshmen, not advanced undergraduates interested in creative writing. Most of the instructors I've talked to hold convictions not only about writing style, but notions that could be called perhaps "humanistic" or "psychologistic," depending on interpretation, and they are encouraged to use these notions as part of their techniques in the classroom. For instance, the instructors I observed have noisy, lively classrooms, which even stimulate telephone protests from nearby offices, as I saw one afternoon. The instructors I observed used an intimate yet loud speaking style, which was paradoxically not contradictory. Students speak up in like manner: "That's funny. Maybe it's just me, but I never noticed before how..." Students who listen to a tape of their comments, then read the first draft of their compositions, then listen to the final tape of the final draft, and then hear students say to them, "You switch style," seem to agree and say, "Here I was more alive and more natural..." Then the students rewrite to capture this living, natural quality which their writing teachers are stressing.

This intimate analysis, responsibility for one's own work, and search for an involved, emotional writing style seems to be an interesting emphasis of the project, perhaps innovative, and it seems to have led to other interesting classroom projects.

The careful attention to individual students is insured by a very light teaching load, 20 students for the entire year of 3 quarters, with teaching assistance from graduate students. The instructors have final responsibility for how they meet with their classes, when, who comes, etc. The typical pattern is one like this: all 20 students meet once a week, usually to discuss the reading; groups of 7 or so meet twice a week to get writing assignments, comment on writing techniques, listen to records or tapes, etc.; each student meets individually with the instructor at least once every two weeks for an hour to examine the student's writing, to play back his tapes, to discover what the student does well and encourage him further; in addition, the students and instructors go out once or twice a week to the high schools and elementary schools in the area. In other words, the total class load is almost minimal, but the extended involvement of the instructor with student seems very high.

Some of the classroom practices I observed also struck me as interesting and perhaps innovative. For instance, in one class studying the Orson Welles radio play, the discussion focused around the question, "Just when did your credulity stop?" This implied a discussion of Welles' techniques of fostering credibility. The assignment which followed was an assignment to write a radio skit on a similar political-scientific theme for the next class meeting. The instructor announced that the best two or three skits could be combined, the entire class would perform the skit and tape it for other classes as well as for themselves. The notion of writing leading to performance, the notion that lessons should lead to writing, and that techniques are teachable bolstered this entire lesson. The class displayed an easy informality with an atmosphere of "We're all here to write." These generalizations, since they seem so biased and overfavorable, can be checked against the log I kept, a log similar to that used by teacher evaluators at Foothill, scoring student interaction and recording comments. Another practice which one instructor claimed was the most important aspect of the program was the permissiveness of the program. He cited such evidence as the casual, supportive attitude in encounters with students during mid-quarter exams and finals in which some Voice Project instructors helped students with tests in other subjects; he also cited the practice of giving "suspended grades" for the year, with the assurance the student will be graded on improvement. He hoped this would stop their worry and they could "concentrate on their writing. It becomes a way of life for some students."

These interesting classroom practices are not only supported, but encouraged, by the structure of the Voice Project. The head of the project, Professor Hawkes, seems to be the prime source of support, stimulation, and control, in all matters from casual encounters with strangers who are observing the project and who are led to feel free to observe, comment, and share experiences from other institutions, to the instructors and students within the project. Hawkes calls a weekly meeting of the project and seems to chair them in a colleaguial rather than hierarchical manner. He asks for classroom material from all instructors, and all seem to participate equally in the discussion. The instructors bring tapes with them to the meetings of the best hour they had during the past week (our recent meeting which Clive Miller attended demonstrated the tape of a young child, John Wakabayashi). They also bring logs of every class hour, typical student writing, or accounts of problem hours, and they demonstrate their methods to each other. This in-service training and control, if we can call it that, seems to be an enjoyable feature of the program to the instructors, mainly because, as two of them said, Hawkes is enthusiastic in support and dynamic in his analysis of problems. I asked what they will eventually do with these tons of material -- yards of tape from each instructor, masses of papers, documents from high schools, elementary schools, old narrators of folk-lore, etc. I was told that eventually these may be written about in professional journals for teachers of composition, or they may be used as suggestions for the second and third year of this project, or they masy be written up as units for books, and at the least, they all become the material of the participating instructors and assistants in their future teaching assignments. The project instructors' morale, which seems astonishingly high even to a casual observer, seems to be related to the chairman and structure of the group, to their feeling that they are doing something innnovative and experimental, and to their hope that their methods can be spread to other teachers and help them in teaching composition. To this end, visitors are encouraged to observe, the instructors go about giving lectures and demonstrations, and the director and instructors will write about their experiences, both successes and failures, in the Voice Project.

Possible suggestions for Foothill College

The basic suggestion is obvious, a suggestion Foothill experiment or do research in one of the basic problems in teaching junior college reading and composition, or, an easier task, a project involving only our institutional needs, how to improve one or another of our courses. Of the most important basic problems, Foothill might examine ways to hold and train students who enroll in English 200; the federal government may even be interested in supporting such work if the analogous examples of Operation Headstart, the War Manpower Training program, and the Job Corps can be cited. Another basic problem might be research in training more effectively the students who fill English 102 classes, maximal stimulation being the goal. The federal government might be interested here if we could demonstrate that this group fits a definition of "culturally deprived" or "underachievers." Finally, basic research in combining logic and creativity, a need newly cited by Professor A. Grommon in the current issue of College English, might find support by foundations interested in concepts of creativity. These pieces of research might be relevant to English 1A and 1B and the honors sections of these courses.

Failing such ambitious programs, Foothill might be interested in research on improving our course offerings, for instance, working with teachers of English 200 so they can become comfortable and effective with these students; setting up 2 or 3-man groups to teach English 102 or English 1A in differently-structured ways and then comparing results on a standard scale; or developing joint composition and subject-matter courses like a joint Philosophy-English Advanced Composition course or a joint History-English course, or a joint Art History-English seminar with two instructors involved in a team-teaching effort. At the very least, Foothill might review the experiments and practices of other comparable institutions and comparable Freshman Composition programs, like the programs at the University of Montana, Boston University, Harvard University, programs at College of San Mateo and the like. A modest beginning at some of this coursework innovation might be made during the summer with intensive blue-ribbon Honors Seminars copying the methods of the Voice Project, or the course recently added at Los Angeles City Harbor College, Advanced Composition based on selected reading of one 19th or 20th century writer.

Now, more specifically from the Voice Project itself, here are some suggestions for ways to copy the project or experiment with some of the methods.

1. More use of teachers who volunteer for different kinds of courses with different methods, in groups with a colleaguial leader, with frequent meetings to discuss common problems and successes, and with some notion their work will lead to an article or a book. (A suggestion from the Junior College Journal on professionalizing teachers by suggesting excellent in teaching should lead to publication.

2. More systematic use of the writers now on our faculty, perhaps even granting a title of "Writer in Residence," with some released time, for that faculty member to talk to classes, especially English 200 and 102. More use of guest lecturers in classrooms.

3. More experimentation with different-sized classes meeting at differently scheduled hours. What kinds off benefits might students derive from meeting with an instructor for a scheduled long period of time, in exchange for cancelling certain scheduled class obligations?

4. Obviously, more experimentation with audio-visual techniques in the classroom, like the Voice Project's use of tapes, records, etc.,... an idea brilliantly illuminated by George Willey at Asilomar during our conference on innovations in college teaching (January 6, 1967) when he simultaneously used film-strips, slides, musical tapes, a spoken taped narration, and accompanied this presentation by asking questions about how we meet the different needs of our students. The pleasure in this guided questioning that we experienced made many of us realize that we could call it a learning experience for ourselves. More of us might benefit by the examples of Geo Logan and Dianne Appleby who used tapes of "A Time for Burning," the videotape of a recent television program based on the difficulties of integrating Negroes into white Christian church congregations. Their showing of tapes led to several class hours of discussion and then a composition based on the videotapes and the discussion. Dianne Appleby later explored the use of film observation and direct observation of people as a basis for teaching paragraph writing in English 200. She intended she said to "woo students to writing by showing selected films" noting changes in attitudes of people, and suggesting to students that they watch the people involved, their gestures, clothes, attitudes, words, and interaction with other people. She said her students seemed "orally adapted" and made precise generalizations in class, which led to their writing much better paragraphs than their usual work. "Their eyes and ears were their resources," she summarized, "and they asked to see the film twice, themselves, the first time they initiated action in my class." Their writing, she feels, benefited from building on the strengths of these students in listening, watching, and discussing before they wrote. Jim Luotto this year experimented with his poetry course by suggesting his students write Japanese haiku at the beginning of the course, and he read their efforts back to them in conjunction with slides, musical records,and dittoes of the Students' poems which they could read as he read to them -- an experiment in total stimulation and in focus on words, which he felt had some carry-over into at least the next few weeks of learning the forms of poetry. Bob Fairall has for some time used the standard art history slides, but with the addition of music to accompany and reflect the periods of art he was presenting. About a year ago, along this line of thought, Jack Wright was discussing the possibility of an Audio-Visual Institute for English teachers with a complete demonstration and observation of every technique and resource available at Foothill.

5. In some ways, less stress on grades and more on cooperative ventures in small group writing, such as a small group working together to construct an absolutely air-tight logical argument which will be considered the work of each, and will be ruthlessly and painstakingly examined by the teacher. Or, we could try a combined project of debates with teams, between classes, etc.

6. More stress on universal class participation every day. The IBM computer methods which stress individuation, instant feedback, and attention to progress can also be used, at least analogically, by composition teachers who use each day as a laboratory for improvement in writing. Individual tapes and the use of laboratory time for each student might work here.

7. Some examination of the ways in which student panels, debates, and oral methods such as class demonstrations and explications can be used in literature classes to energize such classes.

8. Some examination of the notion that Foothill students work with elementary school children on some writing problems as part of their training.

9. More recognition to the idea that Foothill can help aspiring writers in our community with its creative thinking program in cooperation with Foreground, or Fairly Free Thinker, or the technical writing program for certain kinds of writers. In other words, demonstrate that Foothill is interested in training writers, an idea based on the Voice Project, and San Francisco State College's attempts. The recent Jazz-Poetry Recitals can be cited as good examples for other such prestigious, successful efforts.

APPENDIX B

THE VOICE PROJECT IN THE LOCAL SCHOOLS

An Experiment in Teaching Writing to College Freshmen
Conducted at Stanford University 1966-67
Under a Contract the the U. S. Office of Education

The assumptions underlying the Voice Project are, first, that the Stanford freshman will base his writing in part on his own recorded speech and on the recorded speech of others; second, that he will initiate much of his own work and that his reading and writing will be grounded in a variety of activity both inside and outside of the university; and third, that within the framework of this project he will become involved with a variety of people concerned with language, such as teachers from various fields (literature, social studies, psychology, etc.), teachers from other colleges and universities, actors, writers (novelists, playwrights, poets, etc.), and graduate students, as well as students and teachers from as many levels as possible within the local school system. In effect, the Stanford freshman would be offered facilities and experience ordinarily reserved for the student with special interests or obviously revealed talents. Our purpose is to encourage creativity in the freshman's uses of all kinds of language (spoken and written, fictional and non-fictional) and to help him to base his speaking and writing on a better understanding and appreciation of the communication and learning processes in which he lives. Thus we would like the freshman to be able to participate in such projects as the Ravenswood Children's Center and the Stanford Upward Bound continuation program, and especially to participate in elementary and secondary school activity in local areas. We feel that many freshmen will benefit considerably from such involvement and that the aims and resources of the Voice Project may come to be of benefit to these community enterprises and to the local schools. Clearly enough, educational discoveries and progress are becoming increasingly dependent on various kinds of interaction between the elementary school, the secondary school and the college.

We envisage several possible relationships between the Voice Project and the local schools:

1) In general, the five writer-teachers working full time in this project each quarter will be available to schools for readings and discussions of their work. In addition, certain writers visiting the project as consultants may also be willing to give readings in the schools. Selected Stanford freshmen and Voice Project staff members should be present on these occasions, and whenever possible we should use the written work of such performing writers in the experimental teaching units described below.

2) Voice Project "teams," consisting of a writer-teacher or graduate student and two to three Stanford freshmen, might work with groups of, say, six school students who would benefit especially (because of their gifts or problems) from sessions devoted to writing. Depending on the school students involved, these sessions would be conducted as group discussions or on an individual basis, would be structured when necessary around particular problems, or in the case of skilled students (perhaps already writing poetry or fiction) would be relatively fluid. These sessions should involve a) in-class writing to be done by team members as well as school students, and b) the reading aloud of materials written both by team members and school students. The school students would a) "compose" some of their work aloud on the tape recorder, b) record and play back work they had written, and c) do a certain portion of their revising through use of the tape recorder. In order to facilitate the students' use of the tape recorder as a writing aid, we would furnish them with transcripts of their taped material.

3) In the area of reading and language study, we might make an effort to correlate in one way or another the function of the Voice Project team with any particular subject matter or objective of the school teachers. Here the purpose of introducing the Voice Project team into the school situation would be to reinforce the teacher's specific aims and to increase the proportion of "teachers" to students. A Voice Project team might contribute to the study and appreciation of point of view in Huckleberry Finn, for instance, by dramatizing with the aid of the tape recorder the difference between Huck's view of a sunrise as seen from the raft and Mark Twain's own view of a sunrise as seen from the bridge of a riverboat (in Life on the Mississippi). This exercise has been used effectively by teachers in the Pre-College Center Program, which is supported by Educational

Services Incorporated of Newton, Massachusetts. Word games, brief dramatic presentations involving the students themselves, and the use of reinforcing written and recorded material could all be correlated with given segments of the curriculum. Here advance preparation on the part of the Voice Project teams would of course depend on advance knowledge of the curriculum. And here it might be desirable for every school student in a given class to be allowed and encouraged to participate in a Voice Project group -- especially if the class is composed of advance placement students.

4) A perhaps more obvious use of Voice Project teams in the schools (again in the area of reading and language study) might well involve the preparation of experimental teaching units related only generally, rather than specifically, to the school curriculum. An example of three open-ended units that could be planned for three consecutive hours (days) and intended to introduce the student to the concept of "voice" might be as follows:

SOUNDS, WORDS, AND VOICES (THREE UNITS)

UNIT: Sounds

The team teacher for this day (one of the Stanford freshmen) would conduct a discussion based on one or several or even all of the following tape-recordings. He would introduce the session as a listening game, indicate that he wishes to give the students a series of different sounds to talk about, and ask the students to identify on paper the sounds as they hear them. These listening exercises are intended to appeal directly to the student's imagination and intellect, to renew the student's interest in sound, to heighten his sensitivity to listening, and to dramatize sensory perception as a form of communication similar in many ways to that achieved through the use of verbal language. The recordings and topics or problems are to be prepared in Voice Project classes at Stanford and may be geared to any grade level. However, for the purposes of this illustration they are conceived as appropriate to ninth-grade students.

A. Recording: Laughter, rain, bell buoy, wind, steam locomotive, crying. After identifying the sounds, the students would be asked to describe them briefly, to state exactly what the sound "tells" them (or does not tell them), and to describe what associations the sounds evoke. The students would then be asked to consider the sounds in terms of pattern and classification. This discussion should clarify 1) the difference between the concreteness of sounds and the concreteness of words; 2) the problems of context and connotation in both sounds and words; 3) the "real" basis for making certain kinds of associations. Thus the school students will be engaged by the sound of laughter and in turn may laugh themselves (whereas the word "laughter" does not produce laughter), will learn by experience that the sound of laughter may express number, gender, feeling (perhaps spite) and personality (shy); whereas in contrast the word "laughter" is, out of context, both limited and unlimited, and can be written in only a few forms. Furthermore, some students will hear a sound they have not heard before (bell-buoy), may describe the sound as unpleasant, hollow, disturbing, etc., may say that it tells them about dead sailors or tells them "to beware of the rock," then come to realize that in a specific context a bell-buoy may tell the ship captain that he is safely inside the harbor. And lastly the students will be able to hear for themselves the air-water "ground" shared by these apparently disparate sounds, and hence should discover for themselves the idea of coherence and the natural power to which much of our language refers.

B. Recording: Rain forest, amusement park.

Here the group response would be directed toward the perception of specific sounds within a context and toward establishing analogies between two very different worlds of sound.

C. Recording: Laughter (mass; of a single person; between two persons).

This discussion should establish 1) "language" as common property, 2) the range of tones of a single, non-verbal "voice," 3) non-verbal language as a medium for dialogue.

No matter which recording(s) the group might work with, it would be important to tape-record the students' responses and to play back some of these responses so that the students could appreciate and understand the content of their own re-

UNIT: Words, Written and Spoken

A. One Word

The students would listen to a recording of an actor reading aloud at least two versions of the nonsense rhyme "Fuzzy Wuzzy" and describe the various meanings the actor gives to these sounds and written constructions. The students would then listen to a recording of two actors carrying on dialogues using only the word "you." Finally the students would themselves "perform" by attempting 1) to think of words which imply a speaker, and 2) to say aloud the word "tonight" in as many ways as possible. The exercise would dramatize still further the difference between written and spoken expressions and illustrate how, in the process of speaking, the language of everybody may become the language of the individual.

B. Dialogue: general or mass language and the language of the individual. This exercise would be based on a mimeographed passage of dialogue from Dylan Thomas' Under Milkwood (pp. 10-12), from which the speakers' identities had been deleted. After several volunteer readings, performed by each of several students, the group would discuss the number of speakers involved, their characters, and the reasons they speak as they do. Next, two students would read aloud the passage, each attempting to assume the identity of one of the two speakers. In the ensuing discussion the characters of the speakers would be further described, and the ways in which they appear to use a common language for different purposes would be pointed out. Finally, the students would listen to a recording of this portion of the play, and in discussion confirm or change or enlarge their initial responses. The purpose of this exercise is to allow the student to learn by experience the richness and universality that may be imparted to apparently colorless language, and to appreciate the difference between the written and spoken (or acted) forms of this language. It is important for the student to realize 1) that even colorless language may sometimes suggest a voice, 2) that colorless language becomes unique because of the needs of the speaker, and 3) that in a discussion of the oral expression of written material we should keep in mind the possible differences between the actual speaker or singer and the "speaker" suggested or created in the language itself.

UNIT: The Speaker

This unit would deal with the difference between works that demand oral (spoken or sung) interpretation for their fullest expression and those that do not. In general the student would be concerned with voice as a vehicle for actual personality, or assumed role, and as it reveals changes in attitude (tone). The exercise would enable the student to perceive congruence between the voice of the singer (or poet) and the "voice" audible in the song or poem itself, and also to determine the appropriateness of a singer's oral interpretation. Students would read aloud and discuss transcripts of these materials before listening to recordings of them.

Recorded material would include:

A. Two songs on the same subject sung by different singers (Barbra Streisand's "A Taste of Honey" and Simon and Garfunkle's "I Am a Rock"

B. Two songs on the same subject by one singer (Bob Dylan's "It Ain't Me Babe" and "Don't Think Twice, It's All Right")

C. The same song sung by different singers (Joan Baez's and Miriam Makeba's "House of the Rising Sun")

D. Two poems which illustrate the consistent voice of the poet (two poems by Dylan Thomas)

In conclusion, Project members would like the opportunity to work with these and similar units in local schools, and would like to observe and participate in local school classes in preparation for these various activities. In addition, we would welcome the participation of local school teachers in the Voice Project activities, including teaching sessions as well as the special seminars to be conducted by consultants to the Project.

August, 1966

APPENDIX C

CONSULTANTS

In addition to several school teachers who served as consultants to the Voice Project during the year, nine consultants from other universities visited the experiment, including the novelist John Barth; the poet Denise Levertov; John Hersey, novelist and Master of Pierson College, Yale; John Knoepfle, poet from St. Louis University; Crolyn Fitchett from the Institute for Services to Education; Reverend Walter J. Ong, S.J., from St. Louis University; Jerome Bruner, Director of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard; Herbert Kohl, Director of the Teachers and Writers Collaborative at Columbia University; Rosemary Pierrel, Dean of Pembroke College, Brown University. Each consultant visited classes, Voice Project staff meetings and regular Freshman English staff meetings. They occasionally gave public lectures and usually conducted one or two informal seminars. Participants in these seminars were the Voice Project staff, local school teachers and administrators, and students and faculty members from Stanford and nearby colleges and universities. Some of the problems and ways of thinking about the teaching of reading and writing that recurred from meeting to meeting can best be indicated by describing briefly the seminars held by Jerome Bruner, Herbert Kohl, and John Hersey.

Jerome Bruner conducted two meetings during his stay at Stanford: a large evening seminar attended by teachers, writers, and graduate students in the Bay area and, on the following day, a smaller meeting attended primarily by Stanford teachers representing the Departments of English, Psychology, and Linguistics, along with writers and teachers connected with the Voice Project and Freshman English. In the larger meeting Mr. Bruner's talk, and the discussion which followed, centered on the relationship between voice and audience and on the functions of language and how these functions differ in writing and speech. Mr.

Bruner also considered, first, motivating students to write versus teaching writing skills and, second, the study of drama as a general learning device. He suggested that the constant effort to motivate the young writer may be less important than the discovery of new teaching skills which may enable the student to express powerful subjects already in his possession.

Rev. Walter J. Ong was also a consultant to the Voice Project at this time, and the dialogue between Father Ong and Mr. Bruner was important to this project. Father Ong suggested that the two-fold and paradoxical efforts in the teaching of writing were, first, to start with the student's own frame of reference, and at the same time, to provide him with indications of what the world outside the student will expect from him and his writing.

On the next day, Mr. Bruner focused the discussion on the psychological relationship between the teacher and the student-writer. He asked the group to consider how a teacher might respond to a piece of writing:

BRUNER: Suppose, for example, you have a task as a teacher, and you're going to give some written assignment. You give what seems to be our favorite straw man: Write a composition about what happened this summer. You want somehow to have some means of responding to the child's effort to write. He'll write awhile and then there'll be a pause in which he'll sigh. At the first sigh, you take the thing; you're going to respond. How do you respond to what the child has written or keep him going? What do you do? What do you do to help the child continue this act of writing?

PARTICIPANT: You respond in a way which encourages him.

BRUNER: Do you say, "Greato," or something like that?

PARTICIPANT: No, you respond in a way which you think will be supportive or rewarding to him. Whether something's correct or not, is perhaps not as important as stimulating his desire to write more for you.

ONG: What would be some typical remarks that you might possibly make?

PARTICIPANT: "That's really a good idea here, can you develop it a little bit further? I'm really interested in what you're saying. You've got the point." Motivational statements.

BRUNER: So that's one thing -- you give them motivational statements. "Your effort's great, and I see where I think it's fine," and so forth. What about on the cognitive side? One of the things he wants to know is whether anybody understands what he's talking about. So, do you restate and say, "Is this what you mean?"

PARTICIPANT: But that also is a motivational statement. "I understand what you're saying here -- this is beautiful."

BRUNER: Suppose he wants to know whether you're being nice or whether in fact you understand. You then would restate -- let me just go back. One of the things that happens in what one of my colleagues and friends calls "the original language game" is when a kid is learning how to speak, he tries his first kind of blunder of an utterance, which turns out to be quite telegraphic, and the parent then patiently fills it in. The child says "Mommy coffee," and the mother says, "Yes, Mommy is having her coffee now." It's quite important because there's some kind of expansion and idealization. Do you do the same thing for writing?

PARTICIPANT: There's a difference between responding to the spoken communication and responding to the written communication, because the gap between the time the person has written and the time you respond is so great that perhaps you can't be concerned with changing the form of the response, maybe all you can be concerned with is encouraging him to continue to want to respond.

ONG: Suppose some children are playing a game of trees, with their hands up, and one of the boys says, "I'm a tired tree; I feel like a tired tree," and develops a few statements along that line. Now what do you say?

BRUNER: Do you say, "What kind of a tired tree are you? Do you want to differentiate yourself?" It just seems to me that maybe looking at it in this kind of slightly dumb way -- you could argue to start off with that one of the problems in the teaching of writing is that we wait until they've written a huge thing and then we say, "Good." And they're wondering what in the world we said "good" to. We don't really do enough about specifying what the writing is. Do you want to stop him after a particular point and say, "Continue that," or "Elaborate that." This is a very real problem.

PARTICIPANT: Does this typify your response to writing on many different levels or are you speaking simply about a certain age group? It seems to me that there are important distinctions between the response you'd make to a child --

ONG: That's right -- I would hardly do this to a graduate student.

PARTICIPANT: Well, I'm speaking even of high school teaching and college teaching of writing.

BRUNER: We're always assuming that the major task is essentially one of keeping the effort going. I'm going to operate on the assumption that there may be some powerful effort to express, and that the real problem is how you equip students with the skill of getting it into a form. Let me take the coldest possible form of discourse and see what in fact you do there. Suppose you take the cold discourse of symbolic logic as a case in point and here you're teaching somebody to write in symbolic logic. You want him to be as aware as possible of the logic inherent in a notation or expression. So he goes to the board and he whips off an "If A, then B." And you say, "That's great. Are you fully aware of the implications of that?" And likely as not, he'll say, "Huh?" And you say, "I want you to be able to restate it in such a way that you can get all the implications out of the thing." And then you check through what is the case. For example, in the truth tables, what you do is to get him to translate out of an "if-then" statement into a set of truth tables in which he can take a conjunction of A or not-A and B or not-B, and check off which ones are true and which ones are false, in the statement, "If A, then B." In a sense what we do is equip him with enormous, almost surgical, skill in the use of the notational system. You do the same thing when you're teaching a person how to play the piano from a notational system on a staff. But do we do enough of those when we're teaching the student how to write or do we just assume that the motivational, psychological thing is enough?

ONG: Well, the language which you used at the outset was interesting to me, in looking at the problem of teaching writing. As I recall, you said, "You want him to --" and it seems to me this is one of the places where we get off the track at the very outset. We want a person to learn to write, and the first place is not to start with what I want him to do, but with his frame of reference and his experience. I think this is the very first place where we get off base.

BRUNER: But we don't want to let so important a skill go by way of fortuity.

ONG: Well, it does all the time. But on the other hand, there's a very deep problem here. Here's a youngster who's never written at all, and what's he supposed to do when he writes? Doesn't a frame of expectation help him to get going? He has never tried to communicate with someboy who isn't there. Remember, learning to talk is play, learning to write is always work. He's in an artificial situation to a degree. So it would seem that some kind of expectation from outside is going to be absolutely necessary to help him in getting off the ground. He's going to have to find out what it is that people want him to do.

PARTICIPANT: But isn't the question the kind of artificiality you create? Because most writing is criticized at some point or evaluated, but it's rarely done on this step-by-step basis.

BRUNER: Which would probably interfere with the flow of thought anyway.

PARTICIPANT: You've got an audience, that is, a teacher, who says, "Write, so I can evaluate what you have to say," which is quite different from most writing situations. So the analogy between what you could call "mature writing" and what the kid does in school ---

ONG: You have a problem, in that you have the teacher as an audience and yet I doubt whether the teacher really expects a pupil ordinarily to write for the teacher. So the student has to solve that awful problem of just who this thing is supposed to be directed to. The audience here, the readers here are fictional, they're a creation, an imaginary thing he has to learn to carry in his mind. But he has done some reading, heard some voices, and he tries to imitate what his experience has been. The problem should be faced more squarely in teaching writing, the problem that the writer has of trying to find out just who it is that this is addressed to. Chaucer himself had trouble going from the oral to the written and had to set up an elaborate oral frame of reference, so he had an audience within his story to tell the stories to.

PARTICIPANT: The problem is that there is no audience when we are in our rooms or even in a classroom. It doesn't seem to me that this is necessarily an obstacle or that this is "necessarily" work. It seems to me that there can be something intrinsically pleasurable about controlling an experience by putting it into words, or expanding an experience by putting it into words. I don't know why we have to think that past the age of five a person can no longer get pleasure from writing. It seems to me that the job in the teaching of writing is to clear away all the clutter so that the person can be dealing with the language and the experience, and get all the stuff out from in between, whatever they may be, all the other considerations of pleasing the teacher, or other people. This is the job in teaching: getting the confrontation with the concrete thing.

ONG: I agree with all that, that you've got to get rid of pleasing the teacher, but you've still got to have some kind of audience.

Father Ong continued to discuss the question of audience in writing and its relationship to voice in his talk in the afternoon.

A working seminar of approximately forty participants held during Herbert Kohl's visit centered our attention quite specifically on the relationship between the teaching of writing in schools and in college and on the actual objectives of such teaching. Kohl was with us to talk about the language of the younger ghetto student, and this subject caused us to reexamine what we expect language to do and to attempt to redefine our ideas about the values of language. The problem of standard versus non-standard English, which has permeated our activities this year implicitly or explicitly, was especially prominent here. This particular meeting had an added significance since it was the first time we were able to involve many Voice Project student-teachers in this kind of working situation.

In the course of the meeting Herbert Kohl focused the discussion on a piece of writing by a young Negro student:

> The condemned building
>
> There is a leaky faucet, going with a steady drip of water, there is a certain gloom and uneasiness in the room. There is no recreation whatsoever where a person can spend his leisure time, but there is something to look at, the walls which have plaster peeling, which suggests different moods that a person may be in, the walls are so arranged that they suggest different scenes like maybe a scene of you gradually graduating from boyhood to man when the mirage has passed you notice that the windows are uneasily pitch black suggesting for you maybe a private hell, where you can satisfy your own desires. Then your eyes slowly move to the cieling which suggests a mirage of hevean where you may have a chance to find out the real meaning of life, the windows and the ceiling have a certain contrast between each other which seems to worry you into making a hasty decision, which swiftly moves you to the door with which you step out into the outside, where you ask yourself why is this building condemned, where a person can find his inner self. Why do they condemn this building where man can find out what he is or will be.
>
> Why do they condemn Life
>
> The End
>
> By Alvin Cury

The participants in the seminar were asked to consider how they would convince the student of what he had achieved in this prose and help him to continue writing.

KOHL: Now I'm going to put you in the situation. This is the first response you've gotten from a child -- well, not a child; Alvin's going to be sixteen, he's sixteen. How would you respond?

JOHN FELSTINER: I might ask him if he thought about saying "I' Instead of "you," in other words, saying "These are all the things that I felt."

KOHL: Can anyone respond to that?

FRANCELIA MASON: My initial response is great enthusiasm.

KOHL: You'd be enthusiastic? But what I really was saying, "How does one express one's enthusiasm to someone who has produced this thing?" It takes something incredibly out of him to have written this, to have produced this as a first thing. And the real question is, "What kind of response do you think would make sense to him at the time?"

DALE LESLIE: I'd say that there is a beautiful movement in it, but that he should try putting it down in a different way, maybe with lines or color.

KOHL: Why would you ask him for a different way? In other words, you're saying that the form he's chosen, for some reson, is not an adequate form to express his feeling.

LESLIE: No, I'm just saying I'd like to see the rhythmical pattern experimented with.

JOHN HAWKES: Dale, you mean you'd like to see it visualized? (Dale assents.)

KOHL: I'm trying to get at a number of different things. Given the kind of pain that goes into this, you're saying take the same thing, take the same feeling and then play with it?

MILES PUTNAM: I'd simply tell the boy that I like it, that it gives me a deep sense of how he feels. I might hope to read it twice more and it would perhaps lead to something else later. If he's put a lot into it, and it's come out as well as this, why not just let it stay? If he wants to change it later, he can.

CLIVE MILLER: Surely your response depends upon the kind of person he is. If he hasn't been writing, perhaps one of the reasons may be because he's afraid to expose himself. Depending upon why he hasn't been writing, this would alter your response. So that, if one of the reasons he hasn't been writing is because he hasn't exposed himself, then certainly one way would be to expose yourself in return.

TOM GRISSOM: Let me be the devil's advocate for a minute -- I will empathize with the English teachers in high school and say that I have a responsibility to tell the boy there's a world out there that will not recognize words that are not spelled correctly. How do you match up the realities here?

KOHL: Is that a direct question to me?

HAWKES: I think you ought to wait to answer the question.

PUTNAM: Well, I'll respond, if I may. To me, this boy has difficulty in writing with sentence structure, how to spell words and so forth, but there's a beautiful flow moving all through it. It's clear; it makes sense. Now I agree with you that there is a responsibility on the part of the teacher, and you think, "Someday I hope this boy can go out and get a job." But there's a difference in the kind of writing itself. Here he's expressing himself, trying to bring out something that means a great deal to him, I think it's very important to him, and I don't think it should be touched. The other kind of writing can be learned, and it will be learned when the boy can establish a rapport with the teacher. This kind of thing doesn't lend itself to closer consideration of grammar and spelling.

MARK MIRSKY: I think it's madness to get involved in this, beyond asking him if he wants you to correct his spelling. He might say yes or no, and then you forget the question.

DIANE MIDDLEBROOK: I was just thinking as I read it to myself for the third time how very much thought there is in it, and maybe the person who wrote it doesn't even realize, and I think you would want to call his attention to it so he can see how very deeply he's thought about this, and how much there is to think about again.

KOHL: I couldn't agree with you more; you've hit on the one thing I wanted to say about looking at this. Look at the transformation this boy has tried to make. He's taken the situation, he's created images -- images which can be discussed. He's tried to create a structure. He's tried to equate a condemned building with the condemnation of a man's life. He's tried all kinds of ambitious things in here. And why is it that when one starts talking about the writing of children one leaps to the kind of thing one wouldn't dare leap to when the writer is John Hawkes? There is an incredible amount to discuss just about what this boy as a writer is trying to get at, is trying to write about. He's trying to move from something physical to something -- well, you can call it metaphysical if you want -- but he's also trying to move back to the physical. He's trying to play a very complicated game. The real question that I've found confronts most teachers, at least the teachers that I've confronted who try to teach writing, is what does one do next when one gets a piece of writing that is of some value, something you don't want to destroy, at the same time, what do you do?

HAWKES: I'm not sure you've defined clearly enough the initial situation. If you're talking about our first response to the piece, which first response? the moment we read it? the moment we write about it? the moment we talk to the student after we've written about it? Or, are you talking about what might happen in a small group of students if you introduced this or another piece? I was assuming that perhaps we were talking about the last. We had a small group of students, this writer's one of them, and we're with them. The first thing, I suppose, is that he'd read it aloud. So at least we'd have it in our ears orally -- we've had the silent voice first, and now we hear him read it. Is that a beginning?

KOHL: Yes, this is what he did -- well, he didn't do it; someone else read his piece because he won't talk -- I mean in general, he just is not interested in talking. Well, he'll talk to some people but I'm not one of them, right now.

GRISSOM: If everything people are saying in this room is honest, then the logical extension of this is you don't ever care about the way people spell or how grammatical they are, and that says a lot about the society in which we live and the notion of a classroom. And it says a lot about some of the teachers, and has grave implications for this whole process of a teacher with a student. And if you really believe that you shouldn't turn a kid off because of the way he spells or his grammar then it seems there's an ideal toward which you're moving. And you're saying, "I don't choose to be responsible toward a world in which someone has to communicate to get a job."

MIRSKY: I think there's a difference between spelling and communication. There's a place where spelling becomes so impossible that it's not communicating. Then I think you have to be a pretty poor teacher not to step in and tell the student.

HAWKES: On a point of grammar, just grammar alone, Kim, can you reconstruct a little bit of our concern this afternoon with that little bit of grammar about the owl? Do you remember how we responded to it?

KIM DUNSTER: The thing with "only"? "It was dark in the park, and only the one who had the light was the owl." It was a case of the child's using a phrase that we're so used to that it's a cliche to us, but the child was seeing the meaning from a fresh point of view, directly. He hadn't heard about cliches yet, and he went ahead and said, "Only the one who had the light was the owl." But it didn't matter.

HAWKES: "Only the one who had the light was the owl." Now it is perfectly reasonable and right to respond to that grammatical structure, at a certain point, not the first time necessarily with this student, but you respond to that syntactical disarrangement positively. It just so happens that that syntactical change had a very necessary and powerful effect. It was, in effect, a kind of metaphor -- a lot of meaning and feeling was locked and packed in there. So by talking, not very professionally, I'm afraid, because neither Kim nor Cynthia nor myself was able to pull out the terms, but we were concerned with the syntax in order to get at a terrific effect that was being created in the piece. Now surely you wouldn't deny us this freedom to respond in that way to the structure of language at the right point. Because what you find is, students -- and we're all students -- get something out of that. And it is human and it is pertinent to his meaning, and it is crucial. We're not talking about mechanics in any simple mechanical fashion at all, but they're obviously there in crucial ways.

KOHL: Writing's a very funny thing -- you put down things, and you come back to them a lot later -- at least I guess I'm talking about myself, but I say Alvin would take this thing and would read it and would recognize frequently when he's communicative, would recognize in his images just a great deal of meaning, would recognize in his locutions a great deal of meaning, which perhaps he hadn't thought out previously. He would be able to tell you -- often, not always -- why he said, "There is no recreation whatsoever where a person can spend his leisure time." And he's talking about his home, and he's talking about what in fact is one of the central problems of his life. There is in fact no recreation whatsoever where a person can spend his leisure time. He's making all kinds of identifications; he's packing things in together. And he means it. And if you start picking it apart, you can very easily destroy the meaning for him because he can't fight it with you verbally.

By the end of the meeting there was general agreement that certain kinds of non-standard language have a power and expressive potential which we need to preserve and develop as fully as possible; that younger students, deprived as well as privileged, should be encouraged to talk and write freely and creatively;

that our school systems need to find new ways of valuing the language of all kinds of students and of helping students to extend and control their various abilities to use language.

In the seminar held during John Hersey's visit, we tried to focus our attention still further on what we were attempting to do in the schools and on student writing that resulted from our team teaching efforts in the schools. Much of this meeting was actually conducted by a Terman High School English teacher and a Stanford freshman, with whom she had been working. We distributed copies of folktales and fantasies written by the Terman students and discussed several of them which were striking for their vividness, persuasiveness, and individuality. After hearing and talking about a tape recording of one of the school sessions, we debated once again a kind of pragmatic view of teaching versus teaching which liberates the students and threatens a good many dimensions of society and language usage:

PEGGY GLENN: As a brutalizer, I want to ask, what do you suggest a person do who finds a student with a lovely ethnic voice and one is supposed to be preparing this kid to get into the College of San Mateo or work for the telephone company?

FRANCELIA MASON: Well, for one thing, it's two separate exercises: you want the kid to recognize the beauty of the ethnic part and as a separate exercise, maybe a different hour of the day, you'd also have to teach him the spelling and grammar. The more we can separate, the more free their expression seems to be.

JOHN HAWKES: I wonder about that -- this question of the separation of various aspects of writing. If you could keep expanding or trying to expose in some other way the power that's in the piece, it would seem to me that you might be accomplishing both things at once. I have the feeling that this fourteen-year-old student ought to be able to express himself in speech on an idea. If he gets an idea that is as important as this fear, I suspect that you could have the same kind of directness, reality, concreteness, rhythmic power and that this could develop into a more formalized kind of prose. I could never really have the job in mind -- it would be way off somewhere.

GLENN: I think it was right before you came into this particular class, we were taking some rock'n roll sounds -- They had gone out and listened to songs on the radio and they had recorded a series of non-standard sentences and when you came in, we were in the process of taking these sentences and rewording them, either very, very formally or the way you might say it in various situations. And this sort of thing works but that doesn't say that you have to use a piece like this in order to teach standard English. I don't think you should.

BILL ALFRED: Well, I'd like to ask you what do you do in a case like that because it's difficult all the way through. You talk about having in a school, having somebody read you something and saying, "Now what did you really mean?" I've done that with seniors in college on their theses. You know, it continues all the way through. But what kind of thing do you do to make standard English something that has the element of play in it? That's really the way people get engaged in something.

GLENN: One thing I have done -- I don't know whether you'll approve or not -- is to give them a piece of non-standard English and have them translate it into standard; and then take a piece of standard and have them write it anyway they like with the same idea.

HAWKES: You could play role-playing games with a piece of writing. It's quite possible to translate it according to who's speaking it and why. That might be a possibility.

PARTICIPANT: The word standard is -- I don't know what that means -- but I think it means to try to talk to the students about audience. I think they go through school writing for some generalized fiction that doesn't exist -- that every piece is written in a very similar fashion. And once you get across the idea that there is an assumption of audience -- you are writing for yourself or for a particular group of people who believe a particular set of ideas. Who are you writing for? -- once you ask that question then the student has to get the sense that there is no standard. The idea of standard is a horrible thing, to teach a student to go out and write for a telephone company -- then he can do what Francelia was mentioning -- make distinctions: the exercises are different -- there are different ways of writing because there are different people listening. I think that that has to be stressed.

ELAINE SMITH: One thing I notice in my own writing, the comments that I think will be more valuable are the comments that say, rather than that this sentence is grammatically incorrect, or not standard English, "This doesn't come across" -- perhaps for the exact same reason. If you say, "I as a reader, don't really get the idea," or "It doesn't come across to me," that's much more important than the only reason this is wrong is because it's not standard English.

PARTICIPANT: I couldn't agree more. One corrects papers -- he doesn't do it at random -- he helps the student with his rhetoric: "How can you write this sentence to get across the idea more effectively? And it's not that this is bad grammar or structurally wrong, but what can you do in revision?" And then you can help him revise the sentence so that he can write more effectively.

SMITH: I can think of a lot of times when I was in high school or junior high when those comments didn't come. You know, I got all these marks correcting grammar but no actual comments saying, "I didn't get the idea of the sentence." I think you really have to be careful that the student knows just why you are marking it all up -- you have to know why it didn't come across so you are not just going through a book of grammar, looking up things, and writing them down that way.

CINDY ROPES: I think in the Voice Project, there is the problem for the Stanford freshmen "for whom are you writing?"

MARK MIRSKY: I think you've got to be very careful here not to throw out the idea that there are audiences in the world. When I write to City College asking for a job, I watch my grammar. And when I sit down to write to my girlfriend, I just have a different sense of myself -- I write in a different way.

CLIVE MILLER: When you talk, also -- I talk to Jack differently than I talk to you. There may be a fine difference there but it's because you're in tune with the person, the audience that you're talking to. I notice this with one of my students who talked about and wrote about a person's arms and legs as his "body members." And I was disturbed by the total remoteness that the student had to her material but now, thinking it over, I think it was a role that she was playing. She had some concept of a vast academic audience. And I think that you have to consider the concept of audience in voice.

MIRSKY: A very good problem has been brought up -- these kids have to go out and get jobs in the high schools. Bill, what do you think? I want to hear from you.

ALFRED: I do think -- and I quote Seymour Simkes that there are three styles just as there were during the Middle Ages: there's the high style, the mean style (Laughter) -- he said, "The agony has abated; the pain has stopped; it don't hurt no more." (Laughter) You begin with one style and then you have to make the bridge into the other style.

HAWKES: It sounds reductive -- you turn on this style, you turn on that style.

ALFRED: I don't mean that, but you have to help them to do that without telling them.

PARTICIPANT: You know, they have to be aware of the various levels of usage and you have a responsibility whether it's the telephone or PG&E, whatever it happens to be.

HAWKES: I don't think that one should go voiceless when writing to the telephone company.

DOUGLAS TOM: You sure do if you want a job! (Laughter)

PARTICIPANT: I find that no matter how many pages of comments I write about a composition, no matter how many questions I think are inciteful, that I interject between the lines of what he has said or is trying to say -- I still feel futility until I can sit down with him and talk. And that talking goes on for a good hour because it gets more depth until finally we're relating to what's on the page. And this kind of revision that we were talking about happens between two people so that it can continue.

HAWKES: Well, I suppose what we're aiming for is certainly that kind of one to one relationship, and we're also hoping for small group effort that could become as serious and real as what you're talking about.

MILES PUTNAM: I got the impression that the Voice Project was going to do what was just mentioned -- that is, it was going to help students so that they could write for the telephone company or for any particular company and sound like human beings. And I think it's important then that a student be able to write in his natural language. He should also know that he has to direct this to a different audience but he doesn't want to lose himself in doing so, so that in moving from one type of writing to another, he doesn't sacrifice his personality. And this is the job of the teacher -- to try to help him shift from one to the other. It seems to me that this could be done and what Miss Glenn is doing with her students in writing non-standard to standard and at the same time helping him stay in his writing.

HAWKES: And part of that task is moving from some kinds of non-standard English which might be terrifically powerful. If you're going to move to something we would call standard English, the task is not merely a translation -- it is a totally creative and thoughtful effort to find a language that is in every way an equivalent of that original non-standard expression. We can translate the non-standard expression into standard English and have it go absolutely dead-- it's not saying the same thing -- it's not communicating the same thing at all. The task to use language correctly but interestingly or intricately or powerfully or subtly with a kind of poetic clarity is a very difficult thing. But it seems to me that that's the kind of thing you're looking for. If you choose this means of working with sentences that are quite unsyntactical and you attempt to make them syntactical, which you really can't do anyway, but if you do manage to do it, the loss is overwhelming. You should be making an effort to retain the effectiveness of the original expression.

Finally, in the course of talking about his own writing and the writing process in general, Mr. Hersey discussed what he took to be for the writer the crucial relationship between seeing and hearing, which he also takes up in the following letter:

> Dear Jack:
>
> This trip gave me lots to think about -- the whole thrust of your meetings. I liked that phrase ("cleverly clear") in the kissing tale and was fascinated by the phenomenon of groping or blurting that it manifested -- the brilliant turns and passages that had their authors, when asked about them, completely buffaloed. The mysterious power of those blurts suggests a weakness of the critical approach to the teaching of writing, which makes everything of conscious craft: "distance," "point of view," you know the catchwords; they all have meaning, God knows I feel that control matters, but these shouldn't come first. The two best things about your program, it struck me, were that you do put the first item first, the search for the only self; and that writers do your teaching, makers to help makers. The hazards, of which you're all too aware, I'm sure, are that the freshman year, when a single student may contain a whole cluster of selves striving with each other for mastery, may be an early time to ask for a clear voice; and that the writer-teacher may mistake echoes of his own voice, whenever he hears them, for the sounds of the true voice of the writer-student. But at least the freshmen are learning to listen with a keen ear, both to themselves and to their teachers, so that as they harden up into separate persons they will be aware of the tones and colors of invention and imitation. There, with "colors," I slip into the other mode I think of all the time, the visual. I suppose one can include a writer's way of seeing in the conceptualization of his voice; it certainly seems to me to be vital. One man sees unusually sharply all the way from the focus right out to the limits of peripheral vision; another looks through a needle's eye, one sees motion, another needs to rest his gaze; one feels colors burn, I'm green blind; one sees starkly, another has a kind of dream vision, with transparencies overlaying one another. In the best writing all the senses figure vividly, but ear and eye, or eye and ear, certainly dominate. At any rate, what you're doing is to my taste: instead of overwhelming your students with technical cant or threatening them with James or Faulkner or Bellow or Barth, you're making them aware that every man has his own sound and that even a freshman can be a bard, or at least a crier. Some of them must be getting excited.

I was thrilled by the idea of the work in the schools; I was aware of a problem of thinness there, a question of time, wanting to do much more, especially wanting to make those visits mean more to the freshmen as chances to utter.

All best to you,

John Hersey

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ABSTRACT

"An Experiment in Teaching Writing to College Freshmen" (Voice Project), was conducted within the regular Freshman English program at Stanford University. The experiment was carried out by a group of teachers who were themselves writers (from Stanford but also from other colleges and universities) and an equal number of graduate students--participating as team teachers--along with a hundred student volunteeers. The aims of the experiment were: 1) to teach writing, not through rhetorical techniques, but through helping the student discover and develop his own writing "voice" and a personal or identifiable prose, whether the writing be "creative" or expository; 2) to involve in such teaching novelists, poets, playwrights, essayists and persons in diverse academic disciplines; 3) to work at various age levels, through involving both students and faculty in experiments in elementary and secondary schools; 4) to work with students from various social and economic backgrounds; and 5) to involve other institutions of higher education through visits, exchanges, seminars, and demonstrations.

The materials in this report document what went on in the classroom, how our students taught in local schools, how we encouraged students to write and revise their work--especially through the use of the tape recorder--and the kind of teaching a group of our students undertook in a special summer program for entering Negro students at the College of San Mateo.

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